

Die Serie "London Bombing" ist eine Sammlung relevanter Artikel und Nachrichten aus verschiedenen Quellen. Das hier veröffentlichte Material dient als Grundlage für weitere Diskussionen und zur Vertiefung über die Terroranschläge in London. Die Serie besteht aus vier Teilen und ist als PDF Datei zusammengefasst.

2005 / Journalismus - Nachrichten von heute // Stephan Fuchs

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UK INTELLIGENCE IN SPOTLIGHT OVER LONDON BOMBS

- Reuters / by Mark Trevelyan, aAdditional reporting by Jon Boyle in Paris
- Yahoo News
- CCISS / by Martin Rudner /

Jul 8 2005 - Jul 8. The bombers who spread death and chaos across London's transport network slipped under the radar of police and intelligence services who said there was no advance warning of the capital's worst militant attack.

Security analysts said it was far too early to apportion blame to the intelligence community over an operation that some suspected was the work of a small, autonomous group of local militants inspired by al Qaeda.

Home Secretary Charles Clarke confirmed media reports that intelligence chiefs had reduced the threat level from al Qaeda from "severe - general" to "substantial" as recently as last month following Britain's general election. But he said even if the alert level had been higher, it was unlikely the bombers could have been stopped.

"At the end of the day we are looking for needles in a very large haystack, the city of London," Clarke said.

"We're obviously looking very, very carefully at all our intelligence to see whether anything was missed, but in fact we don't believe anything was missed and it simply came out of the blue."

But Anthony Glees, an intelligence specialist at Brunel University, said questions would be asked as to why the threat level was reduced shortly before Britain was due to host a Group of Eight summit of the world's most powerful leaders.

"They did downgrade the threat even though it was objectively quite clearly a time of heightened political interest. I think questions will be asked about it," he said.

At least 37 people were killed as explosions ripped apart three underground trains and a bus on Thursday morning, just as G8 leaders were getting down to summit business in Scotland.

INTELLIGENCE REFORM

Britain has reformed its security structures to wage the war on terrorism, creating a new body — the Joint Terrorism Analysis Center — to bring together the domestic, foreign and military intelligence services, the GCHQ communications interception center and the police. Spain and Australia are among countries that have adopted similar models.

In common with other European nations, British officials have been expressing increasing concern about the threat from home-grown militants, acting autonomously and without traceable links to known suspects. Home Office Minister Hazel Blears told a conference earlier this year that the previous focus on a threat from foreign nationals had given way to awareness of a "growing engagement in terrorism from British citizens as well."

Small cells that do not rely on financial or technical support or orders from outside are harder to intercept using the kinds of measures that authorities have emphasized since the Sept. 11 attacks, such as closer scrutiny of money transfers and tighter immigration and border controls.

"If you have people who are very prudent about contact, who communicate little, who avoid traveling to Iraq or Afghanistan or Pakistan, who avoid frequenting mosques which are too closely watched, those kind of people have every chance of slipping through the net," said security analyst Claude Moniquet.

He said the type of operation carried out in London required local knowledge: "This is not something that could be done by someone who arrived from abroad a month ago. It's clearly an attack prepared quite some time ago by people on the spot."

It was the third recent occasion that European intelligence services had been caught by surprise, following last year's Madrid bombings and the murder of a Dutch film-maker by a suspected Islamic radical last November.

Although most of the Madrid suspects were foreign nationals, especially from Morocco, they were living in Spain and apparently did not rely significantly on logistical support, cash or instructions from abroad.

In the Netherlands, the accused killer of film-maker Theo van Gogh was linked to a radical Islamist group, again of mainly Moroccan descent. But the cell appeared to operate as a self-contained unit, not part of a Europe-wide militant network.

"To combat the groups you either need to turn a member, which is time consuming and difficult, or penetrate the group," said Eric Denece, head of the French Intelligence Research Center.

"The people we're confronting have time on their side. They will try 20 times, 30 times, in 99 percent of the cases we'll succeed in preventing their operations. But there will always be one that slips through the net."

ISRAEL OFFICIAL: SCOTLAND YARD ALERTED ISRAEL PRE-BLAST

- AP

- Dow Jones Newswires

- Spy News newsletter and discussion list / by Mario Profaca

Jul 8 2005 - Jul 7. British police told the Israeli Embassy in London minutes before Thursday's explosions that they had received warnings of possible terror attacks in the city, a senior Israeli official said. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because of the nature of his position.

Israel was holding an economic conference near the scene of one of the explosions. Israeli Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was supposed to attend, but the attacks occurred before he arrived.

Just before the blasts, Scotland Yard called the security officer at the Israeli Embassy and said warnings of possible attacks had been received, the official said. He did not say whether British police made any link to the economic conference.

Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom said he wasn't aware of any Israeli casualties

The Israeli ambassador to London, Zvi Hefetz, said Thursday that the embassy was in a state of emergency following the explosions in London, with no one allowed to enter or leave.

Danny Biran, an Israeli Foreign Ministry official, said all phone lines to the embassy were down.

The ministry has set up a situation room to deal with hundreds of phone calls from concerned relatives. Thousands of Israelis are living in London or visiting the city at this time, Biran said.

Amir Gilad, a Netanyahu aide, told Israel Radio that Netanyahu's entourage was receiving updates all morning from British security officials, and "we have also asked to change our plans."

Netanyahu had been scheduled to stay in London until Sunday, but that could change, Gilad said.

LONDON BOMBS

Al-Qaeda Figure Warns Of Score To Settle With Berlusconi

- AKI

Jul 8 2005 - Jul 8. One day after the attacks in London, a leading member of al-Qaeda in Saudi Arabia has warned that they still have a score to settle with Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi. The threat, signed by Lewis Atiyallah - well-known for his contributions to the Saudi al-Qaeda magazine Sawt Al-Jihad - comes in a document entitled: 'Blair, this is an epic war', published on the Internet on Friday.

It follows another statement on Thursday from a previously unknown group, the Secret Organisation Group of al-Qaeda of Jihad Organisation in Europe, which said it was behind the blast, and threatened both Italy and Denmark.

"Yes, Blair is right, it is an epic battle and not partial, as your American allies claim" Atiyallah's statement reads, "and if you want proof, look at the new weapon used by the mujahadeen in Iraq, who kidnap your children and Western

followers." The message goes on to mention "when the mujahadeen kidnapped four Italians", referring to the four security guards kidnapped in Iraq in April 2004, one of whom, Fabrizio Quattrocchi, was killed by his captors.

"One of their [the kidnapers] requests was that Berlusconi should apologise for the violation of the rights of Islam and Muslims. This is an old debt that Berlusconi still hasn't paid: on that occasion the Iraqis decided to talk in the name of Islam and Muslims to make Berlusconi pay his debts for the blood of their children spilt by Italians. This is an example to show how the epic war and Iraqi situation will settle many scores."

While the four Italian security guards were being held hostage, via statements issued on the Internet the suspected kidnapers called on the Italian premier to apologise for his controversial comment following the September 11 attacks in America, that Western civilisation is superior to Islam.

"Without any help or prompting, or leadership and logistical support the mujahadeen carried out the plan fearlessly," Atiyallah also said in the statement, which hypothesises the war in Iraq as the reason for the London attacks. "The next [attack] to come will be worse," Atiyallah threatens, announcing that there will be "a huge explosion". He goes on to say, "The American generals consider the situation under control, while Tony Blair affirms that this is an epic battle: this is true and the moment has come to settle scores with the whole of the West over Iraq."

ISRAEL WAS WARNED AHEAD OF FIRST BLAST

- Arutz Sheva

Jul 8 2005 - Jul 8. Army Radio quoting unconfirmed reliable sources reported a short time ago that Scotland Yard had intelligence warnings of the attacks a short time before they occurred.

The Israeli Embassy in London was notified in advance, resulting in Finance Minister Binyamin Netanyahu remaining in his hotel room rather than make his way to the hotel adjacent to the site of the first explosion, a Liverpool Street train station, where he was to address an economic summit.

At present, train and bus service in London have been suspended following the series of attacks. No terrorist organization has claimed responsibility at this time.

Israeli officials stress the advanced Scotland Yard warning does not in any way indicate Israel was the target in the series of apparent terror attacks

NETANYAHU CHANGED PLANS DUE TO PRE-ATTACKS WARNING

- Al Jazeera

Jul 8 2005 - Jul 7. It's been reported that Israeli Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu decided not to attend an economic conference in London after the Israeli embassy received a pre-attack warning.

A top Israel foreign ministry official said that the British police informed the Israeli embassy in London of possible attacks minutes before Thursday's attacks.

Netanyahu was supposed to attend an economic conference in a hotel over the London subway stop where one of today's explosions took place, and the warning promoted him to change plans and stay in his hotel room instead, government officials said.

The foreign ministry official, who demanded anonymity, said that Scotland Yard called the security officer at the Israeli embassy and told him that they received warnings of possible attacks minutes before today's first blast. But he didn't say whether British police linked the attacks to the economic conference.

Israel's Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom denied that the embassy received any warnings, saying that only "There was no early information about terrorist attacks."

He also confirmed that Netanyahu had planned to attend the conference, but said that "after the first explosion our finance minister received a request not to go anywhere," Shalom said.

However, Amir Gilad, a Netanyahu aide, told Israel Radio that Netanyahu's entourage was receiving updates all morning from British security officials, and "we have also asked to change our plans."

Netanyahu had been scheduled to stay in London until Sunday, but that could change, Gilad said.

TIMERS USED IN BLASTS - PARALLELS TO MADRID ARE FOUND

- New York Times / by Don Van Natta Jr. and Elaine Sciolino

Jul 8 2005 - Jul 7. Investigators searching for clues in the attacks here said Thursday that the three bombs used in the subway apparently were detonated by timers, not suicide bombers, and that a fourth device may have been intended for a target other than the city bus that it destroyed.

Senior police officials said they had not received a message claiming responsibility for the attacks from any group, and had made no arrests. But officials immediately drew parallels between the London bombings and the ones that struck commuter trains in Madrid 16 months ago, which were carried out by a Qaeda-inspired cell.

By Thursday night, there were far more questions than answers confronting Scotland Yard. One official said none of the scores of suspected terrorists being watched closely in England appeared to be involved.

Police and intelligence officials acknowledged that they were taken completely by surprise by the coordinated bombings, even though they had been anticipating a terrorist attack for years.

The officials said there was no warning or even a hint that an attack was imminent among the blizzard of intelligence accumulated in recent days by the Metropolitan Police and by MI5, the domestic intelligence services.

"There was no intelligence in our possession that these attacks were going to take place today," said Brian Paddick, deputy assistant commissioner of the Metropolitan Police. "We were given no warning from any organization that this was going to happen."

Since Sept. 11, 2001, senior police officials have warned that a large-scale terror attack in Britain was not a matter of if but when, a prediction repeated by a senior police official late last month.

The Joint Terrorist Analysis Center even reduced the threat level of a terrorist attack from "severe-general" to "substantial" early last month. There are seven levels to the security scale, with severe-general the third most severe and substantial the fourth.

The threat levels are not made public, but they reflect the intelligence on potential attacks and help officials to make decisions about staff levels. The alert level was not raised to coincide with the opening of the Group of 8 summit meeting in Scotland, officials said.

Mr. Paddick and other police officials denied that the lower ranking affected the level of the emergency response to the bombings on Thursday. He also rejected the suggestion that the ranking reflected a conclusion that the terrorist threat had eased here.

"We felt it was appropriate, bearing in mind all the intelligence that we were in possession of," he said. "We are content that the security system was appropriate, notwithstanding the G-8 summit that was happening in Scotland."

Michael Mates, a senior member of Parliament's Intelligence and Security Committee, said, "There was certainly a heightened awareness this week, although it's likely that resources were a bit more focused on the G-8 summit." Upon his return to London on Thursday afternoon, Prime Minister Tony Blair vowed that the authorities would mount "the most intense police and security investigation to bring those responsible to justice."

Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said the explosions bore "the hallmarks of an Al Qaeda-related attack," but police officials stopped short of assigning any blame to a particular group. A group calling itself the Secret Organization of Al Qaeda in Europe announced on a Web site that it was responsible for the bombings. The announcement also threatened Italy and Denmark, which have provided troops to the American-led coalition fighting in Iraq.

The authenticity of the message could not be confirmed, and several experts said they strongly doubted that it was authentic.

American intelligence officials said they had begun a detailed review of data gathered in recent weeks to search for possible clues. "Everybody's going back and looking over their reporting to see if we overlooked anything or failed to share it," one senior intelligence official said.

Counterterrorism officials in London said they were still trying to determine the type of explosives that were used. One official speculated that the No. 30 bus whose roof was blown off at 9:47 a.m. in Bloomsbury was demolished accidentally by a suicide bomber. But another theory gaining momentum was that the bomb exploded prematurely as a bomber was carrying it to an intended target, several American and British counterterrorism officials said. The officials said that the three subway bombs appeared to have been detonated by timers, not cellphones or other remote triggers. The bombs on the trains were believed to be package bombs and are believed to have been left by the attackers who fled before they went off.

Officials refused to confirm or deny reports that two unexploded package bombs were recovered from trains. A senior American intelligence official said the British had conducted "at least one controlled explosion" of a suspicious package found after the attacks, but he said he could not confirm that the package was another bomb.

The bombings in Madrid and London were separated by 16 months, and the ones in Madrid were set off by cell phones. But the attacks bear eerie similarities and grim lessons for counterterrorism officials.

"Madrid carried terror to the heart of Europe, but we never believed we would be a lonely, unique case," Jorge Dezcallar, who was the head of Spain's foreign intelligence service at the time of the Madrid attacks, said in a telephone interview. "We just had the bad luck of being chosen as the first target, but not the last. London, like Madrid, proves how vulnerable we are."

Like Madrid, the attacks on London were aimed not at symbols of power like Big Ben or Westminster Abbey but at the mundane: ordinary workers making their way to work at the busiest time of the day. In Madrid, 191 people were killed by the 10 bombs that ripped through four commuter trains during the morning rush hour.

The effect in both cities was to paralyze the ordinary workings of the city. British authorities announced that every inch of every subway train in London would be examined to insure that no more explosives had been planted, just as the Spanish authorities examined every commuter train.

"The explosions were designed to elicit panic among the people," Gen. Hamidou Laanigri, Morocco's chief of security, said in a telephone interview. "That is always the logic of terrorism: to get the maximum attention and impact."

Another similarity is that politics may have played a role in the timing. Thursday was the first day of the Group of 8 talks, led by Mr. Blair at Gleneagles, near Edinburgh. The bombings in Madrid came three days ahead of a close national election.

Both Spain and Britain sent troops to aid the American-led war in Iraq and the military attack in Afghanistan, although it is not known whether support for American foreign policies played a role in the London attack.

British and Spanish intelligence services are operating on the assumption that a network with allegiance to Al Qaeda, either Arabs or one of the emerging Pakistani groups in Europe, was responsible for the London attacks, several intelligence officials said.

"It is still too early to definitively say who carried out these attacks," said Matt Levitt, a former F.B.I. agent and now a senior fellow and director of terrorism studies at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. "But as the investigation into the London bombings proceeds, authorities should not be surprised if the evidence reveals a more critical link to the Madrid attacks."

Senior counterterrorism officials say Al Qaeda had evolved from a structured, hierarchical group to a decentralized organization that relies on small independent groups to carry out "Al Qaeda-inspired attacks."

"There have been a lot of attempts" in London, said Baltasar Garzón, a Spanish judge who has investigated Al Qaeda for years. "And in this case, they finally hit some of the easiest targets with these trains. Their only real obstacle to this kind of action is getting the explosives. Once they have them, it's very easy to attack targets like Sunday trains." Mr. Mates, of the Intelligence and Security Committee, said it had been only a matter of time before a coordinated attack struck London. He said the authorities had thwarted at least three coordinated attacks in London since 9/11. "We've caught and prevented those who were trying to get through and stopped them," he said.

Britain has considerable experience investigating bombs and identifying those responsible, based on years of attacks in London and in Northern Ireland by the Irish Republican Army.

Since the invasion of Iraq in March 2003, Osama bin Laden and other groups have threatened to attack Britain in retaliation for its support of the United States. Last April, Mr. bin Laden demanded that Britain and other American allies pull out of Iraq by July 15, 2004. The deadline passed without incident.

Counterterrorism officials have said they worried that the prime target was the 142-year-old Underground, the world's busiest subway system, which ferries three million people each day. The subway and most public streets are monitored by a vast network of closed-circuit television cameras, whose images were being reviewed Thursday by investigators.

Officials said they were confident that the forensic investigation collected at the four sites would yield clues that might help them identify and arrest those responsible for the attacks. They also hoped to recover DNA samples from bombs and body fragments. All those arrested in Britain must provide DNA samples even if they do not face criminal charges.

HOW EUROPE IS TRYING TO BATTLE ONGOING THREAT

- The Christian Science Monitor / by Peter Ford [and Dan Murphy, Cairo]

Jul 8 2005 - Jul 8. For several years, the British prime minister and senior officials of his police force had been warning that a terrorist attack on London was "inevitable."

On Thursday, the "inevitable" struck, killing at least 33 people and wounding 360. Sixteen months after similar bombs killed 191 commuters in Madrid, London appeared also to be paying the price for Britain's alliance with the United States in Iraq.

"London is the capital of one of the oldest imperial powers, and of one of the powers that invaded Iraq," says Joachim Krause, a terrorism expert at Kiel University in Germany. "There seem to be many reasons to target it."

An unverified claim of responsibility for the four deadly blasts from the "Secret Organization Group of Al Qaeda of Jihad Organization in Europe" called the attack "revenge against the British Zionist crusader government in retaliation for the massacres Britain is committing in Iraq and Afghanistan."

Mr. Blair responded that "our determination to defend our values and our way of life is greater than their determination to cause death and destruction to innocent people in a desire to impose extremism on the world."

"The international intelligence community has been talking for some time about potential blowback from the Iraqi conflict," says Magnus Ranstorp, a terrorism expert at St. Andrews University in Scotland.

"The French say they know of about 100 of their people who have traveled to Iraq, and 70 or 80 British nationals are thought to have been there," he adds.

The claim of responsibility, posted on a jihadist website, warned "the governments of Denmark and Italy and all the crusader governments that they will be punished in the same way if they do not withdraw their troops from Iraq and Afghanistan."

But that does not mean other European governments can breathe any more easily, says a senior French official recently involved in antiterror measures who spoke on condition of anonymity. "No political position protects you from these sorts of people," he warns. "To them we are all crusaders, and there is an infinite world of threats. No country can say they face no threat."

Though the group saying it had carried out the London blasts had not previously been heard of, terrorist experts suggest they might be the work of an ad hoc grouping of Islamist jihadis such as perpetrated the Madrid bombings.

In that case, recalls Dr. Ranstorp, "a complex constellation of groups coalesced around one individual."

"It's very similar to the attacks carried out by North African extremist groups like the one in Madrid," says Evan Kohlmann, author of "Al Qaeda's Jihad in Europe." "As the number of dead rises, it becomes more and more likely that it was carried out by an existing Islamic extremist group" with planning experience and training.

The group appears to have taken into account not only the fact that world attention would be focused on Britain as G-8 leaders met for their annual summit, but also that British police and intelligence agencies had turned their attention to the summit site in Scotland, and away from London.

European governments have taken a number of steps since 9/11 to defend themselves better against terrorist attacks, but all of them have focused on improving police and intelligence capabilities rather than seeing their work as a "war on terror," as Washington has declared.

The European Union has named an "antiterror czar," Guy de Vries, who is paying as much attention to preventive political and social measures to stop the next generation of European Muslims from joining the jihadist cause as he is to current crises.

The EU has also established a "situation center" in which intelligence and police officials from different nations monitor different antiterrorist operations and share information. In Paris, US Central Intelligence Agency officers work with European and other counterparts at a secret center known as "Alliance Base" to plan antiterrorist operations, according to a recent report in The Washington Post.

But this is a far cry from genuine continental cooperation, says the French official. "Intelligence services get information according to their own systems of alliances, and they exploit it for their own interests," the French official complains. "Intelligence meetings are more often than not bilateral, and you cannot say that there is a common European strategy against terrorism."

National intelligence-gathering agencies, on the other hand, are cooperating better with each other than in the past, and overcoming traditional rivalries. The British government has set up a Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre, billed as a "one-stop-shop" fed with intelligence from all Britain's secret services, and the French, German, and Spanish authorities have established similar organizations.

European judicial authorities, however, are having difficulty translating intelligence into evidence, as they begin to prosecute Islamist terrorist suspects. The German government was obliged to deport a Moroccan man back home last month when its case against him collapsed in court, and the largest-ever trial in Europe of suspected Islamist terrorists ended in Madrid this week after unearthing little hard evidence linking any of the 24 defendants to any crime.

AL QAEDA LINK HIDES MULTITUDE OF SUSPECTS

- Telegraph / by Philip Johnston, Home Affairs Editor
Jul 8 2005

- Jul 8. Who was responsible? Reports that a group linked to al-Qa'eda was claiming responsibility for the London bombings tells us very little. There are many fundamentalist organisations that fly under Osama bin Laden's flag of convenience and some of them have bases or off-shoots in London.

Suspects are kept under surveillance by MI5 and the police Special Branch. But one thing appeared clear last night: there was not an inkling of intelligence that this attack was about to happen, even though one had long been feared.

Only a few weeks ago, the state of terrorist alert was lowered from "severe general", the second highest, to "substantial", which means the threat remained but it was not known where it was coming from or against whom it was targeted.

For many years before September 11, 2001, Britain's capital was known derisively throughout the world as Londinistan because of the preponderance of extremist groups that had set down roots, publishing tracts and newsletters and providing financial and propaganda support to overseas activists such as Hamas.

At least a dozen international terrorist organisations and their British-based supporters are banned under a proscribed list introduced in the wake of September 11.

They range from Middle Eastern groups such as Hamas and Hizbollah to the Peruvian Shining Path organisation and the Japanese Aum Supreme Truth movement, a religious cult that released poison gas into the Tokyo underground system.

Organisations can be proscribed if they "commit or participate in acts of terrorism, prepare for terrorism, promote or encourage terrorism or are otherwise engaged in terrorism".

Any group added to the list can mount a challenge before a new independent tribunal called the Proscribed Organisations Appeal Commission, which has still to be established.

Once a group is on the list it becomes an offence to be a member, to support it financially, to display its emblems in public or to share a platform at a meeting of three people or more, with someone belonging to such an organisation.

The intention of this legislation was to ensure that Britain could not be used as a base for the planning and preparation of terrorism here or abroad. But its introduction was accompanied by the sound of stable doors being closed after the horse had bolted.

Britain has long offered a haven to exiled dissidents and in recent years has become an international centre for Islamic militancy. Experts also doubted whether the new law would have much impact on British-based groups since they can change their names and could be driven underground.

For many years prior to September 11, politicians maintained that Britain must not be allowed to become a haven for international terrorists. But it has and, arguably, still is. More than half a dozen governments have filed diplomatic protests with the Foreign Office about the presence of such groups.

They included Egypt, whose President Hosni Mubarak even denounced Britain for "protecting killers". His principal complaint was that supporters of extremist groups that wanted to overthrow the government in Cairo were operating out of London.

Among them are leaders of al-Gama'at al-Islamiya (Islamic Group), which in November 1997 carried out a massacre of tourists in Luxor in which 62 people, including Britons, died. Several members of the group were, or still are, living in Britain, some as political refugees.

After the Luxor massacre, the Egyptian government posted a list of 14 men it said were linked to terrorism. Seven were living in London.

Organisations allegedly linked to Egyptian terror movements have operated out of London under a variety of names. Algerian terrorists, too, operate in London.

France, which has been the target for terrorist attacks, has sought, often in vain, to have the alleged perpetrators extradited. In 1995, after a wave of bombings on the Metro, the French government said the campaign had been ordered from London.

It asked for the extradition of Rachid Ramda, 35, said to be the organiser of al-Ansar, a newsletter of the Algerian Armed Islamic Group, who was alleged to have passed on funds to Islamic terrorist units in France.

He is still in custody 10 years after his arrest, although Charles Clarke, the Home Secretary, agreed in April to extradite him after the French issued their third warrant. However, he has lodged an appeal and remains in Britain.

The difficulties of extraditing suspects and the apparent unwillingness of the British authorities to close down their operations contributed to the country's reputation as a haven for terrorists.

One American-based security group even called for Britain to be placed on the list of countries that sponsor terrorism. Most of the dissidents in London have either been granted political asylum or exceptional leave to remain, both of which carry some obligations not to break the law or foment trouble.

Some who were considered a threat were imprisoned, but the law lords ruled that this was discriminatory and disproportionate and the former detainees are now subject to special orders limiting their movements and contacts.

They include Abu Qatada, a London-based Muslim cleric, who has been identified as the most significant Islamic fundamentalist in Britain and an "inspiration" for terrorists.

SLEEPER CELL OR HOME GROWN TERRORISTS?

- The Times / by Sean O'Neill and Daniel McGrory
Jul 8 2005

- Jul 8. If investigators can link the explosives they are examining to terror attacks elsewhere it will give detectives vital clues in tracking the network

Identifying the type of explosives used in the four London bomb attacks could provide police with the key to tracing the terrorists who carried out the attacks.

Possible evidence was found in the hours after the blasts at Aldgate Underground station and at the scene of the bus bomb in Tavistock Place.

If the explosive type can be linked to al-Qaeda attacks elsewhere it will give detectives vital clues to the network from which the bombers stemmed.

Investigators will also be examining thousands of hours of closed-circuit television footage from street and station cameras. Police officers will try to spot suspects carrying rucksacks or holdalls on to trains and possibly leaving at another station without their luggage. The study of security film may tell officers conclusively whether they are dealing with suicide bombers or terrorists who planted their bombs and escaped, possibly to strike again.

It appears that there was no intelligence – either through undercover agents or electronic surveillance – that these attacks were likely.

The analysis of CCTV is a basic investigatory step taken in the first hours of a typical murder inquiry. Murder squad detectives have been drafted in from across London to help the Anti-Terrorist Squad.

A Scotland Yard source said of the attacks: "This is a total surprise. We have been priding ourselves on our progress in the last few years but tonight we are having to go right back to basics.

"There is no intelligence; we are just not into that world."

Forensic science analysis of the bus bomb scene offers the inquiry team "massive potential for recovery". The likelihood that the bomber died in the blast and the fact that it was above ground raises the chances of finding valuable evidence.

British scenes-of-crime officers are renowned for their ability to recover and preserve evidence. They will divide the area around the attack into sectors and collect every piece of material before reconstructing the scene in an aircraft hangar and making a detailed analysis.

The shattered Tube train carriages will be removed from the tunnels and taken to locations where they can be stripped down and examined.

The bombers, who no one doubts are part of an Islamist group, could have emerged via two routes. The threat that the UK authorities know most about is that which comes from Algerian and North African networks known to have based themselves in London since the 1990s. The al-Qaeda team that carried out the Madrid train bombings had these origins.

But in the past year British police have encountered growing numbers of British-born terrorist suspects – recruited and indoctrinated here but trained overseas.

Whatever their path to jihad, they are unknown to the police and security services and unless vital clues are unearthed at the crime scenes will be difficult to find. The masterminds of the attacks – who will not have risked their own lives – are likely to have left Britain days ago or to have planned them from overseas.

Scotland Yard, despite recent successes in thwarting attacks, had cautioned that one day terrorists would succeed in hitting London. Vigilance had been its mantra.

Yet counter-terrorist chiefs were caught unawares. London was not on its highest state of alert and many senior security figures had been deployed to protect the G8 summit.

There was no indication that the series of attacks was coming. Police sources said last night that known terrorist suspects in Britain were under observation at the time of the bombings and were not involved.

They suggested that the attacks were the work of totally unknown attackers. One source said: "It's back to square one. We have to start again."

There is little doubt, however, that they were carried out by terrorists linked to or inspired by al-Qaeda. The blasts bore the characteristics of an al-Qaeda operation: they were simple and well co-ordinated. The timing, too, was crucial to achieving maximum impact, coinciding with the G8 summit.

One al-Qaeda website made a claim of responsibility that some anti-terrorist experts saw as credible. It stated: "The time of revenge against the Zionist crusader British Government has come. This is in response to the butchery that Great Britain is committing in Iraq and Afghanistan."

The similarities with the attacks in Madrid in March last year, in which 191 people died, are striking. The train bombs in Spain were a co-ordinated series of explosions aimed at commuters during the morning rush hour. The attacks in London followed a similar pattern, exploiting the vulnerability of a huge public transport system.

The bomb on the No 30 bus at Tavistock Place seemed last night to have been the work of a suicide bomber, but it was not clear whether the three devices detonated on Tube trains were "martyrdom operations" or — as in Madrid — triggered by timing devices.

Spanish security services said they had been warning Scotland Yard that London might suffer a Madrid-style attack. Spanish investigators found links between al-Qaeda operatives in Madrid and radicals who lived in North London.

Mustafa Setmariam Nasar, a Syrian al-Qaeda veteran believed to have masterminded the Madrid bombings, lived in London in the mid-1990s and is still at large. Spanish authorities have claimed that Nasar, 46, established "sleeper cells" in Britain, France and Italy that could be activated at his choosing.

Three men are in prison in London fighting extradition to Spain for their alleged roles in the bombings. A number of other terrorist suspects linked to the Madrid attacks remain at large. One key figure is thought to have fled to London.

Another suspect, Hassan Akcha, whose two brothers are accused of being part of the bombing team, disappeared from his home in Stepney immediately after the Madrid attacks.

TERROR ALERT DOWNGRADED, THEN ATTACK CAME OUT OF THE BLEU

- Times / by Michael Evans

Jul 8 2005 - Jul 8. The co-ordinated bombs across London yesterday came out of the blue. There had been no intelligence warning of an imminent or likely attack.

The Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre, which operates from the headquarters of MI5, had uncovered no evidence in recent weeks of an al-Qaeda-style plot to attack London.

The terrorist alert level had been lowered by one grading more than a month ago because it had been judged that the threat, while still high, was lower than it had been since the attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001.

MI5, which advises the Government on appropriate terrorist alerts, had recommended that the threat status could safely be reduced from "severe general" to "substantial".

Before the attacks yesterday, Sir Ian Blair, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, spoke on the BBC Radio 4 Today programme at 7.20am. He said: "We have been described by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary as the envy of the policing world in relation to counter-terrorism and I am absolutely positive that our ability is there."

On the possibility of an attack, he added: "It is difficult to calculate whether it is inevitable that they will get through."

Since the Bali bomb in October 2002, which killed 202 people, the Government has introduced a more complex series of threat levels because it was felt that the old system was not sufficiently flexible. There are now seven gradings, and "substantial" is fourth, behind "severe general", "severe specific", where there is definite intelligence, and "imminent".

Security sources said there had been no reason to raise the alert status because it was high enough, and there had been no indications of any plot to hit London to coincide with the G8 summit in Scotland or the announcement of the host city for the 2012 Olympic Games.

The sources said it was realised that there would be accusations that the intelligence services had failed. "But we have always warned that intelligence never reveals a complete picture. It's a cheap shot to blame the intelligence services, but nothing was known in advance of these attacks," an official said.

One key aspect for the security and intelligence services is to try to pinpoint the precise motivation behind the attacks. Tony Blair said in his statement that the terrorists had chosen the G8 summit to launch the bombings.

However, security experts said that after the jubilation over the announcement of the Olympics for London it would be a classic strategy for al-Qaeda to erase that jubilation with a shock attack. "Jubilation one day and disaster the next, that's the sort of impact these terrorists like to make," one intelligence expert said.

The terrorist threat level had been maintained at "severe general" — the third highest — throughout the general election because of the perceived risk of a possible attack to disrupt voting. It had also been at that level for the wedding of the Prince of Wales in April.

Unlike some European countries, including France, the high threat level had remained unchanged since the September 11 attacks, because of the known ambition of al-Qaeda to hit Britain, as America's strongest European ally.

However, the G8 summit was not considered to be an event that by itself merited raising the alert level. This would have happened only if there had been a surge in intelligence indicating that al-Qaeda or an affiliated group had begun to focus on the summit.

Reports that Israel had given notice of possible terrorist attacks in London were dismissed by the Israeli Embassy and by British security officials.

Intelligence officials said that the terrorism analysis centre would re-examine all recent secret material to see whether, with hindsight, there had been indications that might have been missed.

The centre, which has the prime responsibility for assessing intelligence on international terrorism and answers to Dame Eliza Manningham-Buller, the Director-General of MI5, had been in close contact with other European agencies because of the threat to European capitals after the Madrid bombing in March last year.

There is no indication as yet that yesterday's bombings were directly linked to the Madrid atrocities. British officials said that there were similarities in the co-ordinated attacks and indicated that some of the explosives may have been detonated by remote control, using mobile phones — again, similar to methods used in Madrid.

LONDON BOMBINGS TIED TO MADRID ATTACKERS?

- WND

Jul 8 2005 - Jul 7. British intelligence officials believe today's bomb attacks on London's mass transit system might be tied to the North African-based terrorists who carried out the strikes in Madrid last year, according to a terrorism analyst. Steven Emerson told MSNBC he spoke with an intelligence official who suspected "our North African boys."

"There is an interconnected network of Algerians, of Moroccans, of Saudis operating throughout Europe," said Emerson, according to an unofficial transcript posted by The Counterterrorism Blog.

Meanwhile, the Wall Street Journal is reporting that British police have asked their European counterparts for information on a Moroccan man, Mohamed Guerbouzi, in relation to the attacks. Guerbouzi has been under investigation in Britain in connection with the Spain bombings and a 2003 suicide attack in Morocco.

Emerson also pointed out that the timing of the attack coincides with the opening of the trial of Abu Hamza al-Masri, a radical Islamic cleric in London charged with incitement. The cleric has been indicted in the U.S. on charges of trying to set up a jihad training camp in Oregon.

"The simultaneous nature of the bombings and the potential there was a suicide bomber suggests very strongly that was some type of al-Qaida offshoot of known radical Islamic groups or unknown groups, individuals at least, plotting this for a long time," Emerson said.

A group calling itself the Organization of al-Qaida Jihad in Europe claimed responsibility for the London bombings and threatened Italy, Denmark and other countries that have troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Heroic mujahedeen carried out a sacred attack in London, and here is Britain burning in fear, terror, and fright in the north, south, east and west," said a statement posted on the jihadist website Al-Qal'ah (Fortress).

The group said the attacks were in response to "massacres" carried out in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"We have repeatedly warned the government and people of Britain, and we have now fulfilled our promise and have carried out a sacred military attack in Britain," the statement said. "We continue to warn the governments of Denmark, Italy and all the Crusaders that they will meet the same punishment if they do not withdraw their troops from Iraq and Afghanistan."

Analyst Zachary Abuza, in a post on the The Counterterrorism Blog, said that while the previously unknown group may have direct ties to al-Qaida, "what is more likely is to emerge from the investigations into the London bombings is a cell that is very similar to that which perpetrated the Madrid bombings."

He described it as a "fairly autonomous cell comprised of a marginalized diaspora that had some roots to extremists in their own country, but was really acting independently."

The good news, he said, is that these independent groups are probably too small and autonomous to launch a major catastrophic attack.

"The bad news is that these groups are difficult to penetrate, and their operations, though small are still large enough to cause an unacceptable loss of life and have adverse economic implications."

Abuza pointed out that many terrorism experts assert that al-Qaida, as an organization, is defunct, with its remaining leadership cowering in root cellars.

"I think they overstate al-Qaida's demise; but they do agree that the real threat that al-Qaida poses is less as an organization and more as an ideology and inspiration," Abuza said.

In Spain last year, officials initially blamed the Basque separatist group ETA for the massive ten-bomb attack on three Madrid train stations during the morning rush hour that killed at least 200 people and wounded 1,200 only three days before the country's general election.

But later, a letter emerged from a group called Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigades, which claimed responsibility for the attack on behalf of al-Qaida. The letter, which called the plot "Operation Death Trains," said: "We have succeeded in infiltrating the heart of crusader Europe and struck one of the bases of the crusader alliance."

A document posted on an Internet message board just three months before the Madrid attacks said al-Qaida planned to carry out attacks to sever Madrid from the U.S. and its other allies in the war on terror.

"We think the Spanish government will not stand more than two blows, or three at the most, before it will be forced to withdraw because of the public pressure on it," the al-Qaida document said.

"If its forces remain after these blows, the victory of the Socialist Party will be almost guaranteed - and the withdrawal of Spanish forces will be on its campaign manifesto."

That prediction was fulfilled three days after the attacks when the Socialists overcame a late deficit in the polls and ousted Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar's Popular Party.

The new Prime Minister-elect Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero immediately vowed to pull out 1,300 Spanish troops in Iraq by June 30 if the United Nations "doesn't take control of Iraq."

Zapatero, who fulfilled his vow, called the Iraq war a mistake and said Spain's participation in it "has been a total error."

TERRORISM EXPERT ANALYZES LONDON ATTACKS

Emerson says transit systems will always be a challenge to defend
- MSNBC

Jul 8 2005 - Jul 7. Shortly after the attacks on the London transit system, terrorism expert Steve Emerson joined MSNBC's Amy Robach to discuss the attacks.

To read excerpts of their conversation, continue to the text below. To watch the interview, click on the "Launch" button to the left.

Emerson, on who may be responsible and how the attacks compare to past attacks in Britain:

This is a very difficult moment for the British people. They've been through this before ... but the IRA bombings largely left immune civilians except when they tried to target British government officials.

But the M.O., the modus operandi, of the IRA was always to give warning, to evacuate. Clearly, no warning was given here. The simultaneous nature of the bombing and the possibility of a suicide bomber suggests very strongly that it was some type of al-Qaida or some kind of al-Qaida offshoot of known radical Islamic groups or other unknown groups or individuals plotting this for a very long time.

This could not have been done overnight. (It's) absolutely impossible to have really done the spectacular planning needed to carry out such a simultaneous series of bombings.

Emerson, on what impact the attacks could have on U.S. security:

I don't expect it to unless there is some type of intelligence or warning suggesting that that United States itself would be subject to a series of attacks. That type of intelligence has not been received by the U.S. government. Frankly, the British government didn't receive any intelligence ahead of time. The question is whether the British government would decide to warn that this is something that would be spreading to other continents. I doubt very much that there is anything suggestive of that type of intelligence at this point.

Emerson, on comparisons between the attacks on Madrid and Thursday's bombings in London:

With vast subway systems or vast transportation systems - particularly subway systems that provide concealment possibilities for terrorists - it's almost impossible to prevent any kind of terrorist from carrying out such an attack. In particular if it turns out to be a suicide bombing. If it turns out to be planted bombs that were detonated by remote control or by detonation timers, then there are going to be serious questions asked about whether in fact the London subway cars were kept secure overnight or kept secure during the inspection period that they are all required to undergo almost every single day to prevent bombs from being left on the cars.

Emerson on attacks on transit systems:

The intelligence community has to be 100 percent right. The terrorists only have to be one percent right. In this case, they've proven that one percent to be very lethal. In this particular case, the series of attacks on mass transit shows increasingly that as in the United States, the bombings on 9/11, the bombings on 3/11 and now these attacks, clearly show that mass transit infrastructures in the West are very susceptible and almost impossible to protect by Western law enforcement.

Therefore, intelligence is the first line of defense. The fact that they were not able to stop this type of attack clearly shows there was a failure of intelligence. I'm not suggesting that the British government was to blame, but there was a failure of intelligence, and that's going to be subject to a much larger investigation that will happen way after the casualties are counted in this particular incident.

ISRAEL WARNED UNITED KINGDOM ABOUT POSSIBLE ATTACKS

- www.stratfor.com
- StratFor

Jul 8 2005 - Jul 8. Summary

There has been massive confusion over a denial made by the Israelis that the Scotland Yard had warned the Israeli Embassy in London of possible terrorist attacks "minutes before" the first bomb went off July 7. Israel warned London of the attacks a "couple of days ago," but British authorities failed to respond accordingly to deter the attacks, according to an unconfirmed rumor circulating in intelligence circles. While Israel is keeping quiet for the time-being, British Prime Minister Tony Blair soon will be facing the heat for his failure to take action.

Analysis

The Associated Press reported July 7 that an anonymous source in the Israeli Foreign Ministry said Scotland Yard had warned the Israeli Embassy in London of possible terrorist attacks in the U.K. capital. The information reportedly was passed to the embassy minutes before the first bomb struck at 0851 London time. The Israeli Embassy promptly ordered Israeli Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to remain in his hotel on the morning of July 7. Netanyahu was scheduled to participate in an Israeli Investment Forum Conference at the Grand Eastern Hotel, located next to the Liverpool Street Tube station – the first target in the series of bombings that hit London on July 7.

Several hours later, Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom officially denied reports that Scotland Yard passed any information to Israel regarding the bombings, and British police denied they had any advanced warning of the attacks. The British authorities similarly denied that any information exchange had occurred.

Contrary to original claims that Israel was warned "minutes before" the first attack, unconfirmed rumors in intelligence circles indicate that the Israeli government actually warned London of the attacks "a couple of days" previous. Israel has apparently given other warnings about possible attacks that turned out to be aborted operations. The British government did not want to disrupt the G-8 summit in Gleneagles, Scotland, or call off visits by foreign dignitaries to London, hoping this would be another false alarm.

The British government sat on this information for days and failed to respond. Though the Israeli government is playing along publicly, it may not stay quiet for long. This is sure to apply pressure on Blair very soon for his failure to deter this major terrorist attack.

BRITISH SEEK MOROCCAN MAN IN LONDON ATTACK INVESTIGATION

- [Wall Street Journal](#)
- [The Counterterrorism Blog](#)

The London Attacks

Jul 8 2005 - Jul 7. The Wall Street Journal reports that the British are seeking a Moroccan man, Mohamed Guerbouzi, in connection with the attacks. Text: "A Brussels-based European police official said British police have asked their European counterparts for information on a Moroccan man, Mohamed Guerbouzi, in relation to the attacks in London. Mr. Guerbouzi has been under investigation in Britain in connection with two previous attacks, a 2003 suicide bombing in Morocco and last year's attack on commuter trains in Spain. Mr. Guerbouzi held a senior position in the Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group, or GICM, investigators say. He has been living in Britain for about a decade, the police official said on condition of anonymity. It is unclear if he is in British police custody. Also unclear if he is suspect of direct involvement in Thursday's attacks or if he is a witness. The European police official said Britain wants help in investigating Mr. Guerbouzi, for example, in learning more about his activities in other countries." This is consistent with the comments by our Contributing Experts and others that North African-based terrorists, with ties to Al Zarqawi and Al Qaeda, would be among the most logical suspects, based on their leading role in the 3-11-04 Madrid train bombings.

LONDON BOMBS: CHANGE IN AL-QAEDA'S STRATEGY

- AKI

Jul 7 2005 - Jul 5. A renowned French expert on Islamic terrorism, Jean-Charles Brisard, is convinced that Thursday's blasts in London are the work of international terror network al-Qaeda and argues that it represents a change of tack. In an interview with Adnkronos International (AKI) Brisard said the series of attacks on the British capital's transport system indicate al-Qaeda is setting its sights on Western countries, which it seeks to destroy.

"There is no doubt that these attacks are the work of al-Qaeda. Jihadists have been eying London as a possible target for a terror attack for some time, as is shown by the many plots that the Metropolitan police have foiled in the last few years," said Brisard, a lawyer and renowned al-Qaeda expert, who was engaged by families of the victims of the 11 September 2001 attacks on the United States to carry out an independent investigation into the attacks.

In the past few weeks, police had been receiving "clear signals" from Iraq that an al-Qaeda attack on Western targets was imminent, with London topping the list, Brisard noted.

"Lately, we have been seeing the further radicalisation of groups linked to al-Qaeda's Jordanian terror mastermind Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, who is believed to be operating in Iraq," Brisard said.

The order to launch an attack on the British capital came from Iraq, in accordance with al-Qaeda's new strategy - which is making its cells in Iraq "increasingly dangerous, splintered, and difficult to identify", according to Brisard. "Above all, the organisation is bent on destroying the West," he stressed.

The British government's recent measures to clamp down on Islamist extremists - some of whom have made the United Kingdom their sanctuary - had contributed to the radicalisation of the jihadist cause, Brisard claimed. But Thursday's attacks are above all the result of the al-Qaeda's renewed focus on global Jihad, which is now targeting Western countries to strike at "enemy governments".

London Bombing Teil II

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ARAB NEWSPAPER SLAMS MUSLIMS FOR AIDING TERROR

- The Washington Times / by Colin Freeman
- CCISS / by Martin Rudner

Jul 10 2005 - Jul 10. The editor of the world's leading Arab newspaper has launched a scathing attack on Muslims in Britain for turning a blind eye to terrorist fundraising activities on their own doorstep.

Writing in the wake of Thursday's bombings, Tariq Al-Humayd, editor-in-chief of London-based Al-Sharq Al Awsat (The Middle East), claimed that collections were frequently solicited in London's Arab neighborhoods for terrorist causes in

the guise of charities. In a strongly worded editorial, he said that those enjoying the freedom of life in Britain had a "responsibility" to scrutinize such collections carefully, and if necessary prevent them from taking place. "In London, we have seen, and are seeing, the money being collected in the streets, and the conventions under various titles, and everyone is inciting jihad in our Arab countries and cursing the land of unbelief in which they live," he wrote. "When you express amazement [at this], they tell you that this is freedom. Has freedom no responsibility? No one answers."

Mr. Al-Humayd added: "When you tell them, 'Stop being so tolerant of the incitement that comes from your own country, from your skies, and from your Internet' ... they turn away. And what happened? The terror struck London, indiscriminately. ... For the sake of freedom of all of us, stop the ones who are attacking our freedom."

Al-Sharq Al Awsat, founded 27 years ago, is regarded as the premiere pan-Arab daily, and is distributed in 19 Arab countries in addition to Europe and the United States. Its columnists voice a variety of views within the spectrum of Arab opinion, and the newspaper is considered highly influential.

In similar sentiments, Amir Taheri, an Al-Sharq Al Awsat columnist, criticized Muslims who equivocate over terrorist attacks. Insinuations that they were provoked by Western actions such as the invasion of Iraq, he said, simply gave terrorists the impression that they had tacit support. "Until we hear the voices of the Muslims condemning attacks of this kind with no words [of qualification] such as 'but' and 'if,' the suicide bombers and the murderers will have an excuse to think that they enjoy the support of all Muslims.

"The real battle against the enemy of mankind will begin when the 'silent majority' in the Islamic world makes its voice heard against the murderers, and against those who brainwash them, believe them, and fund them."

For a Decade, London Thrived as a Busy Crossroads of Terror

- New York Times / by Elaine Sciolino

- CCISS / by Martin Rudner

Jul 10 2005 - Jul 9. Long before bombings ripped through London on Thursday, Britain had become a breeding ground for hate, fed by a militant version of Islam.

For two years, extremists like Sheik Omar Bakri Mohammed, a 47-year-old Syrian-born cleric, have played to ever-larger crowds, calling for holy war against Britain and exhorting young Muslim men to join the insurgency in Iraq. In a newspaper interview in April 2004, he warned that "a very well-organized" London-based group, Al Qaeda Europe, was "on the verge of launching a big operation" here.

In a sermon attended by more than 500 people in a central London meeting hall last December, Sheik Omar vowed that if Western governments did not change their policies, Muslims would give them "a 9/11, day after day after day."

If London became a magnet for fiery preachers, it also became a destination for men willing to carry out their threats. For a decade, the city has been a crossroads for would-be terrorists who used it as a home base, where they could raise money, recruit members and draw inspiration from the militant messages.

Among them were terrorists involved in attacks in Madrid, Casablanca, Saudi Arabia, Israel and in the Sept. 11 plot. Zacarias Moussaoui, the only man charged in the United States in the 9/11 attacks, and Richard C. Reid, the convicted shoe-bomber, both prayed at the Finsbury Park mosque in north London. The mosque's former leader, Abu Hamza al-Masri openly preached violence for years before the authorities arrested him in April 2004.

Although Britain has passed a series of antiterrorist and immigration laws and made nearly 800 arrests since Sept. 11, 2001, critics have charged that its deep tradition of civil liberties and protection of political activists have made the country a haven for terrorists. The British government has drawn particular criticism from other countries over its refusal to extradite terrorism suspects.

For years, there was a widely held belief that Britain's tolerance helped stave off any Islamic attacks at home. But the anger of London's militant clerics turned on Britain after it offered unwavering support for the American-led invasion of Iraq. On Thursday morning, an attack long foreseen by worried counterterrorism officials became a reality.

"The terrorists have come home," said a senior intelligence official based in Europe, who works often with British officials. "It is payback time for a policy that was, in my opinion, an irresponsible policy of the British government to allow these networks to flourish inside Britain."

Those policies have been a matter of intense debate within the government, with the courts, the Blair government and members of Parliament frequently opposing one another.

For example, when the Parliament considered a bill in March that would have allowed the government to impose tough controls on terror suspects - like house arrests, curfews and electronic tagging - some legislators objected, saying it would erode civil liberties. "It does not secure the nation," William Cash, of the House of Commons, said of the bill. "It is liable to create further trouble and dissension among those whom we are seeking to control - the terrorists." The measure is still pending.

Investigators examining Thursday's attacks, which left at least 49 dead and 700 injured, are pursuing a theory that the bombers were part of a homegrown sleeper cell, which may or may not have had foreign support for the bomb-making phase of the operation.

If that theory proves true, it would reflect the transformation of the terror threat around Europe. With much of Al Qaeda's hierarchy either captured or killed, a new, more nimble terrorist force has emerged on the continent, comprising mostly semiautonomous, Qaeda-inspired local groups that are believed to be operating in France, Switzerland, Spain, Italy and other countries.

"Terrorists are not strangers, foreigners," said Bruno Lemaire, adviser to Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin of France. "They're insiders, well integrated inside the country."

Another senior intelligence official based in Europe said the fear was that there would be additional attacks in other European cities by homegrown sleeper cells inspired by Al Qaeda and by the attacks in Casablanca, Madrid and now London.

"This is exactly what we are going to witness in Europe: most of the attacks will be carried out by local groups, the people who have been here for a long time, well integrated into the fabric of society," the official said.

Well before Thursday's bombings, British officials predicted a terrorist attack in their country. In a speech in October 2003, Eliza Manningham-Buller, the director general of MI5, Britain's domestic intelligence agency, said she saw "no prospect of a significant reduction in the threat posed to the U.K. and its interests from Islamist terrorism over the next five years, and I fear for a considerable number of years thereafter." Britain's challenge to detect militants on its soil is particularly difficult.

Counterterrorism officials estimate that 10,000 to 15,000 Muslims living in Britain are supporters of Al Qaeda. Among that number, officials believe that as many as 600 men were trained in camps connected with Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

British investigators say that identifying Islamic militants among the two million Muslims living here, about 4 percent of the population, is especially hard. The Muslim community here is the most diverse of any in Europe in terms of ethnic origins, culture, history, language, politics and class. More than 60 percent of the community comes not from North African or Gulf Arab countries, but from countries like Pakistan, India and Bangladesh.

Before Sept. 11, 2001, British officials monitored radical Islamists but generally stopped short of arresting or extraditing them. After Sept. 11, the government passed legislation that allowed indefinite detention of terrorism suspects. But last year, it was overturned by Britain's highest court, the Law Lords, as a violation of human rights law.

Complicating Britain's antiterrorism strategy is its refusal or delays of requests for extradition of suspects by some allies, including the United States, France, Spain and Morocco.

Moroccan authorities, for example, are seeking the return of Mohammed el-Guerbozi, a battle-hardened veteran of Afghanistan who they say planned the May 2003 attacks in Casablanca, which killed 45 people. He has also been identified as a founder of the Moroccan Combatant Islamic Group, cited by the United Nations as a terrorist network connected to Al Qaeda. An operative in that group, Noureddine Nifa, told investigators that the organization had sleeper cells prepared to mount synchronized bombings in Britain, France, Italy, Belgium and Canada. In an interview last year, Gen. Hamidou Laanigri, Morocco's chief of security, said Osama bin Laden authorized Mr. Guerbozi to open a training camp for Moroccans in Afghanistan in the beginning of 2001. Last December, Mr. Guerbozi was convicted in absentia in Morocco for his involvement in the Casablanca attacks and sentenced to 20 years.

But the British government has no extradition treaty with Morocco and has refused to extradite Mr. Guerbozi, a father of six who lives in a rundown apartment in north London. British officials say there is not enough evidence to arrest him, General Laanigri said.

Similarly, Baltasar Garzón, a Spanish investigating magistrate, has requested extradition of Abu Qatada, a radical Muslim cleric living in Britain who received political refugee status in the early 1990's. A Palestinian with Jordanian nationality, Mr. Qatada is described in court documents as the spiritual leader of Al Qaeda in Europe. Although Mr. Qatada was put under house arrest in 2002 and then arrested, he was freed in March and put into an observation program.

He is also wanted in Jordan, where he has been given a 15-year prison sentence in absentia for his connection to bomb attacks during 1998.

For 10 years, France has been fighting for the extradition of Rachid Ramda, a 35-year-old Algerian, over his suspected role in a bombing in Paris in 1995 staged by Algeria's militant Armed Islamic Group. Much to the irritation of the French, three years ago, Britain's High Court blocked a Home Office order to hand him over, citing allegations that his co-defendants gave testimony under torture by the French.

Last week, Mr. Clarke, the home secretary, approved the extradition order, but Mr. Ramda is appealing.

Another prime terrorism suspect who operated in London for years is Mustafa Setmariam Nasar, the suspected mastermind of the Madrid bombings. Although the authorities now cannot find him, he is believed to have visited Britain often and lived here openly from 1995 to 1998.

Officials believe he tried to organize his own extremist group before Sept. 11, but afterward officials say he pledged loyalty to Osama bin Laden. He lived in north London and was the editor of a militant Islamist magazine, Al Ansar, which is published here, distributed at some mosques in Western Europe and closely monitored by British security officials.

Across Britain since Sept. 11, 2001, nearly 800 people have been arrested under the Terrorism Act of 2000, according to recent police records. Of that number, 121 were charged with terrorism related crimes, but only 21 people have been convicted.

In one of the biggest antiterrorism cases made here, Scotland Yard arrested 12 men and charged them with making traces of the poison ricin inside an apartment in Wood Green, in north London, in January 2003. But 11 of the 12 men were acquitted without trial based on a lack of evidence.

Since Thursday's attacks, there have been calls for a crackdown on radical Muslims, including some from Britain's Muslim leaders.

"As far as I am concerned these people are not British," said Lord Nizar Ahmed, one of the few Muslims in the House of Lords. "They are foreign ideological preachers of hate who have been threatening our national security and encouraging young people into militancy. They should be put away and sent back to their countries." He added, "They created a whole new breeding ground for recruitment to radicalism."

Even last week's bombings did little to curtail the rhetoric of some of the most radical leaders, who criticized Prime Minister Tony Blair for saying that the bombings appeared to be the work of Islamic terrorists.

"This shows me that he is an enemy of Islam," Abu Abdullah, a self-appointed preacher and the spokes-man for the radical group Supporters of Shariah, said in an interview on Friday, adding, "Sometimes when you see how people speak, it shows you who your enemies are."

Mr. Abdullah declared that those British citizens who re-elected Mr. Blair "have blood on their hands" because British soldiers are killing Muslims. He also said that the British government, not Muslims, "have their hands" in the bombings, explaining, "They want to go on with their fight against Islam."

Imran Waheed, a spokesman for a radical British-based group, Hizb ut Tahrir, which is allowed to function here but is banned in Germany and much of the Muslim world, said: "When Westerners get killed, the world cries. But if Muslims get killed in Iraq or Afghanistan, it's the smallest of news. I will condemn what happened in London only after there is the promise from Western leaders to condemn what they have done in Falluja and other parts of Iraq and in Afghanistan."

So far, there appears to be little effort to restrain outspoken clerics, including prominent extremists like Sheik Omar, who has reportedly been under investigation by Scotland Yard.

Sheik Omar, who remains free, is an example of the double-edged policies in Britain. He is a political refugee who was given asylum 19 years ago and is supported by public assistance. Asked in an interview in May how he felt about being barred from obtaining British citizenship, he replied, "I don't want to become a citizen of hell."

Information Sought on British Man

- The New York Times
- CCISS / by Martin Rudner

Jul 10 2005 - Jul 8. British law enforcement officials investigating the terrorist attacks here asked their counterparts in Germany and Belgium for information about a London man who is accused by the Moroccan government of engineering the May 2003 terrorist attacks in Casablanca, two officials said Saturday.

The man, Mohammed el-Guerbozi, 48, a British citizen who was born in Morocco, has lived in London for nearly two decades.

At a news conference, Scotland Yard officials denied that Mr. Guerbozi was a suspect in the bombing attacks on Thursday. But on Saturday night, senior British officials said that for caution's sake, they had asked several countries in Europe for information about Mr. Guerbozi and his contacts.

Several news organizations in recent days reported that Mr. Guerbozi had fled London on Thursday. But in a telephone interview Saturday night, he said he was still in London and denied any involvement in the London bombings.

"Nothing is true," said Mr. Guerbozi. "What they said about me after the Madrid bombings, they are saying it again and the media are writing the same things. It is not true. Now they say that I fled from London, but this is not true. I'm here."

Mr. Guerbozi said he offered to speak with the British police, but they did not accept his offer. "I'm not in the mountains and I'm not in the forest," he said. "I'm in hiding and the intelligence service and the police know where I am."

Email spying 'could have stopped killers'

- Observer
- Guardian
- CCISS / by Martin Rudner

Jul 10 2005 - Jul 9. Millions of personal email and mobile phone records could be stored and shared with police and intelligence officials across Europe to help thwart terrorist attacks.

The Home Secretary, Charles Clarke, will propose new measures at an emergency meeting of European Union interior ministers which will discuss the implications of Thursday's London bombings.

He raised the stakes dramatically by claiming they could 'quite possibly' have helped prevent such attacks, by identifying in advance suspicious patterns of behaviour by potential terrorists.

The move comes as The Observer can also reveal that the National Crime Squad has contacted internet service providers in the UK, appealing for them to preserve email messages in case they prove useful to the manhunt. The messages could include highly personal information.

Although police have no powers to force compliance, the memo sent last Thursday suggests it is 'likely that the perpetrators behind the multiple explosions in central London today have used telecommunications systems in the planning and execution of their act', and there was a risk of evidence being lost.

Clarke's proposals for an EU-wide agreement would stop short of such intrusion into the content of emails. But it would require the storing of revealing 'traffic data' - detailing who has called, or messaged whom, with times and locations - for several years, enabling individuals to be tracked across Europe and emerging networks of sympathisers to be monitored.

The Home Office is also pushing for tracking of lost or stolen explosives across the EU, to prevent terrorists getting access to the raw materials of bombs; access to EU databases by law enforcement agencies across the EU; and greater co-operation on tracking stolen passports, which can be used by terrorists to create new identities.

With emotions running high over the bombings, the move will trigger debate about the impact on civil liberties. However, he said Britain and Spain - which has backed the cause since the Madrid bombing - wanted it finalised by the end of the year.

'Terrorism today is by definition international: the more we can survey the way in which people operate, the way in which they make their phone calls, the better your chance of identifying patterns of behaviour which are a threat,' he said. Asked if such measures would have helped prevent the London bombing, he said: 'I think it's quite possible, actually.'

Whitehall sources said intelligence services around the world had also been asked to share any 'chatter' about the bombing.

Clarke also pledged to review draft plans for a crackdown on so-called 'acts preparatory to terrorism' - expected to include new offences of associating with a known terror suspect, targeting terrorist sympathisers - to see whether further measures are required. A new counter-terrorism bill had been almost complete when the bombers struck.

Controversial plans to have suspected terrorists tried by a security-vetted judge and defence lawyer, who would secretly examine evidence submitted by the intelligence services and not seen by the defendant, are on hold. Clarke is said to regard it as too drastic a change to be introduced in the bill due in the autumn.

Both the Tories and Liberal Democrats said they would continue to oppose the identity cards legislation currently before the Commons, although privately Labour MPs admit the parliamentary revolt may now be diminished.

Clarke admitted he cannot claim that ID cards would have prevented the bombing, although he argues that in Spain, where they are compulsory, they helped trace the alleged perpetrators, via their mobile phones, which Spaniards can buy only after producing an ID card.

The data retention proposal would require the saving of millions of pages of personal information for several years: the exact amount of time would be agreed between EU member states, but the UK is thought to favour a minimum of five years. Similar proposals have been opposed by the EU in the past.

Simon Davies, director of Privacy International, said some EU countries including Germany were likely to resist. 'There are some celebrated cases where we know, for example, that traffic data and mobile location has been useful to the police,' he said.

'But this is mass surveillance at its crudest.' It would lead to 'information overload', he said, stockpiling masses of useless information.

David Davis, the shadow home secretary, warned in an interview yesterday that civil liberties should not be sacrificed in the rush to defend Britain. 'The best defence of security is to have the liberties,' he said. 'The first act of the liberation fighter is to try to force the state to do repressive things, because when the state does repressive things it recruits your supporters.'

Sources close to Charles Kennedy, the Liberal Democrat leader, said that his party would continue to defend civil liberties vigorously but responsibly. A source said: 'Everything is going to be influenced by what has happened, but the fundamental principles of civil liberties remain as ingrained as they ever were.'

Clarke, speaking before another meeting of the Cabinet emergency committee yesterday, said the first priority was the criminal investigation.

'The principal problem is getting forensic data that stacks up from the crime scenes themselves,' he said. 'They are appalling scenes and it is very difficult to get the material which can identify who committed these acts and why.'

He said nothing had been ruled in or out, including the possibility of a suicide bomber, and pledged 'a very close examination' of the handling of intelligence prior to the attack.

However, Downing Street sources stressed that the Prime Minister did not blame the intelligence services and said a formal inquiry into what went wrong was not a high priority: 'Although they will review the situation, their first task at the moment is to find out who did it.'

The hate

- Sunday Times / by David Leppard and Nick Fielding [additional reporting: Matthew Campbell, Hala Jaber, Christina Lamb, Robert Winnett]
- CCISS / by Martin Rudner

Jul 10 2005 - Jul 9. Who planted the London bombs? Experts believe a new generation of angry young British Muslims has spawned its own terrorists.

Early last year, as Tony Blair struggled through the long and bitter political aftermath of the Iraq war, yet another bit of disturbing news turned up in his red boxes. A discussion paper prepared by senior civil servants, it raised a subject that last week came back to haunt him.

"The home secretary and the foreign secretary," he read, "have commissioned [this] paper for the prime minister on how to prevent British Muslims, especially young Muslims, from becoming attracted to extremist movements and terrorist activity."

The 36-page paper was littered with misspellings, bad grammar and the egregious waffle that the civil service has learnt from new Labour - "We have a 10-point action plan on engaging with ethnic minorities" - but it dealt presciently with the home-grown terrorism that the police and MI5 believe lies behind last Thursday's bomb outrages in London.

Focusing on young Muslims "who were either born in the UK or who have significant ties to it rather than those who have acquired British nationality more recently", the paper spelt out the disillusionment that might turn a Muslim loner into a bomber.

The prime minister read: "Often disaffected lone individuals unable to fit into their community will be attracted to university clubs based on ethnicity or religion, or be drawn to mosques or preaching groups in prison through a sense of disillusionment with their current existence."

The paper continued: "Policy should have two main aims: (a) to isolate extremists within the Muslim community, and . . . (b) to help young Muslims from becoming ensnared or bullied into participation in terrorist or extremist activity."

This was Whitehall's long-term counter-terrorist strategy codenamed Project Contest. As a strategy it can hardly be qualified as a success after last week's outrages, but it certainly identified the problem.

Intelligence experts and Islamic leaders agree that Thursday July 7 marks the bloody emergence of home-grown Islamic terrorism in Britain rather than the arrival of Al-Qaeda's bombers on these shores. The favourite hypothesis of investigators is that the bomb teams comprised a cell of some eight or nine young British Muslims, led by a foreign-born "talisman" figure who controlled and directed them.

"This is a very worrying situation," said M J Gohel, head of the London-based Asia Pacific Foundation which monitors Islamic terrorism. "We're looking at a new generation of terrorists, people who are not directly linked to Osama Bin Laden or Al-Qaeda so they can slip under the net of the security services. These are people born or brought up in western Europe, so they fit in but are infected by Bin Laden's ideology."

His view was echoed by a former radical who sometimes leads prayers at the Finsbury Park mosque in north London where Abu Hamza, the blind hook-armed cleric, used to preach. "There is a growing phenomenon of angry young Muslims in Britain," said this man, who wished to remain anonymous. "I get many young people who watch Al-Jazeera or Al-Arabiya [the satellite TV channels] coming to me after Friday prayers saying they have seen the atrocities at Abu Ghraib or the defacing of Korans at Guantanamo and what should they do."

"I tell them to study, take care of their own lives, that if they are angry with George Bush or Tony Blair there is no point killing innocent people in Oxford Street. But there may be many more going to crazy people who tell them to take matters into their own hands. There is an absolute majority among Muslims who share the anti-US sentiment of Al-Qaeda and it is easy to harness that."

Who are these young British terrorists and why do they readily fall under the influence of "crazy people"? How are they recruited? How do they operate? What have the police and MI5 done to try to catch them? And are the non-violent majority of Muslim religious activists in Britain the real key to defeating them?

IN THE aftermath of September 11, 2001, British intelligence analysts warned ministers about a new breed of terrorist recruit.

Increasingly, hundreds of young Muslim men, most of them British born, were being drawn to the cause of fundamentalism. Radical websites and imams in mosques in London, Luton, Birmingham, Bradford and Manchester were preaching holy war to disaffected young Muslims who were looking for a purpose.

Unlike the September 11 hijackers, the new terrorists did not have a rigid leadership structure. The majority of them had no criminal record and did not appear on any intelligence data bases linking them to terrorism. They were, in effect, "clean skins" and they were much more difficult to detect.

To counteract this danger, Project Contest was born in Whitehall. Its purpose was set out by Sir Andrew Turnbull, the cabinet secretary, in a letter to permanent secretaries at key government departments in April last year. He wrote: "The aim is to prevent terrorism by tackling its causes to diminish support for terrorists by influencing social and economic issues." Referring to the role played in this by radical preachers such as Abu Qatada (also known as Abu Omar), Turnbull explained: "Al-Qaeda and its offshoots provide a dramatic pole of attraction for the most disaffected."

Of particular concern was that the Islamist terrorist recruiters were targeting the poor and the jobless. An official audit provided to the Project Contest working committee showed that Muslims were three times more likely to be unemployed than the population as a whole.

Surveillance of the Muslim community by MI5 and Special Branch found that extremist groups were also operating within universities to recruit middle-class students. A small group of postgraduates at Imperial College and others at Brunel University in west London were of particular concern.

The paper prepared for the prime minister spelt out the breadth of the problem: "By extremism, we mean advocating or supporting views such as support for terrorist attacks against British or western targets, including the 9/11 attacks, or for British Muslims fighting against British and allied forces abroad, arguing that it is not possible to be Muslim and British, calling on Muslims to reject engagement with British society and politics, and advocating the creation of an Islamic state in Britain."

It stated that "a small number of young British Muslims are known to have committed or participated in terrorism abroad a number of extremist groups operate in the UK and seek to recruit young Muslims and an increasing number of British Muslims, often young, have needed UK consular services after being detained on suspicion of terrorist or extremist activity in other parts of the world (eg Yemen, Egypt and the US)". The paper cited an intelligence estimate that the number of British Muslims engaged in terrorist activity, whether at home or abroad, or supporting it, was "less than 1%" of the UK's Muslim population of 1.6m. But that suggests that up to 16,000 may be involved - a numbing figure.

It went on to explain why these thousands of potential terrorists remain below the security radar: "Whilst many have grown up in Muslim households, a significant number come from liberal, non-religious Muslim backgrounds or only converted to Islam in adulthood. These converts include white British nationals and those of West Indian extraction.

"By and large most young extremists fall into one of two groups: well educated - undergraduates or with degrees and technical professional qualifications in engineering or IT - or under-achievers with few or no qualifications and often a criminal background.

"The former group is often targeted by extremist recruiters circulating among university-based religious or ethnic societies. Among the latter group some are drawn to mosques where they may be targeted by extremist preachers; others are radicalised or converted while in prison.

"However, a significant number of young radicalised British Muslims have been recruited through a single contact, often by chance, outside either of these environments. Such individuals are encouraged to maintain a low profile for operational purposes and do not develop the network of associates or political doctrines common to many other extremist Islamists."

One former radical insisted last week that recruitment is no longer taking place in mosques or Islamic organisations - which are now largely under the control of "moderates" - but in pubs, discos and casinos.

The exporting of home-grown jihadis - and their fanaticism - was confirmed in Iraq last month by a senior insurgent commander, "Abu Ahmad", who revealed that about 70 volunteers had arrived from Britain. Two had been killed fighting alongside him against American troops.

One of these, a 22-year-old known as Abu Hareth, had been born in Britain of Iraqi parents. He was killed in fighting in Falluja in April last year.

"When the battle intensified and due to his lack of military experience I asked him to take shelter in a basement. He refused my advice and told me off for asking him to hide and he said, 'I will hold this against you when the day of reckoning comes for you tried to prevent me from attaining martyrdom'," Abu Ahmad said.

Two brothers - Ammar, 22, and Yasser, 18 - arrived in Iraq from Britain after the fall of Baghdad in April 2003: "They could not wait to go out and fight and kept on asking when they will go into battle."

After about a month, Ammar was killed fighting American troops: "His younger brother Yasser, who witnessed Ammar's death, surprised us by shedding tears of joy and praising Allah for his brother's martyrdom."

The commander continued: "When we returned to our base we asked Yasser to return home, telling him it was enough that his family had lost one son; it would not be right if the second son was also killed and that there were others who would fight on his behalf here.

"But he refused and told us: 'What would I tell my mother? She will not accept me in the house for when she bid us farewell she told us either to return victorious or to achieve martyrdom. I cannot return. I have to finish off what Ammar my brother started here, and anyway I do not want to leave my brother all alone in this land. I want to be buried with him'. And he began to cry."

Abu Ahmad said that having been ordered home, Yasser wrote a letter revealing that when he had arrived in Britain his mother had celebrated on hearing about Ammar's death - "ululating with happiness and calling her friends and relatives to tell them the good news. She distributed sweets and juices in celebration to all those that came to pay their respect".

BRITISH politicians, civil servants and counter-terrorism specialists have been trying to tackle this fanaticism through a mixture of hearts-and-minds projects and increased policing.

Project Contest has led to new laws to curb the immigration of radical imams to Britain and to the controversial proposals, now before parliament, to outlaw incitement to religious hatred. Other initiatives included more government funding for moderate Islamic newspapers, television and radio stations. Measures to create "Muslim friendly" workplaces with more prayer rooms were proposed as well as special mortgages that would enable Muslims, barred by the religion from paying interest, to buy their own council houses.

At the same time, more resources have been allocated to detecting and preventing terrorist attacks. The sheer size of the pool of potential recruits has presented the police and MI5 with an enormous challenge, however.

After the September 11 attacks it quickly became apparent that the intelligence services were woefully understaffed. Eliza Manningham-Buller, who was made director-general of MI5 in October 2002, ran a successful Whitehall lobbying campaign to win funds for another 1,000 officers, a 50% increase in MI5's staffing.

The Metropolitan police special branch SO12, which carries out covert security operations against terrorism, also underwent a rapid expansion, increasing its staffing to more than 800 officers.

In the aftermath of the attacks on America there was, in the words of one senior police officer last week, "a huge intelligence gap". But in the past three years, he added, that gap had closed significantly as the understanding grew of how Al-Qaeda operated. By the beginning of this year there were some 2,500 Special Branch officers spread across England and Wales, with more than 700 in Scotland.

Since September 11 there have been more than 700 arrests of terrorist suspects. Critics of the stepped-up security point out that there have been only 17 convictions - and just three of these were linked to Al-Qaeda related activity.

That, critics said, suggested an over-reaction by the authorities. But insiders say that the figures reflected a deliberate policy. In the past, counter-terrorist operations against the IRA's bombing campaigns would see suspects being followed for months before sufficient evidence was gathered to arrest them.

The IRA had a relatively small number of known operatives whose movements were relatively easy to track. But Al-Qaeda and its affiliates posed an unspecified, mostly unknown and little understood threat of a catastrophic attack in which thousands of people might be killed.

In those circumstances it was decided that no risks would be taken: policing was designed to disrupt and destabilise terrorist activity before it could result in the loss of lives. That meant arresting people as soon as they became known as terrorist suspects. The priority was not gathering evidence for any future court case but protecting the country from attack.

Recently, senior police and intelligence officials became confident that they had “broken the back” of the Al-Qaeda threat to Britain. With the apparent closing of the “intelligence gap”, a more relaxed mood of confidence began to percolate throughout the intelligence community. Earlier this year the security services began to talk about reverting to the old IRA policy of letting suspects run before launching raids to arrest them.

At the same time as this new arrest policy gained ascendancy in Whitehall security circles, analysts began to observe a change in the type of suspect being arrested from foreign-born to British. Trials at the Old Bailey next year will reveal that the majority of the defendants are British citizens.

The vast majority of suspects now on MI5’s watch list have no previous involvement with terrorism. And not being watched at all are the army of “clean skins” or “lily-whites” whose existence is suspected by the authorities but who are still unidentified. It is these invisible young men who may have formed the backbone of the terror cell that struck the heart of London on Thursday morning.

There are various reasons for believing that they were not Al-Qaeda operatives. Intelligence sources say that the organisation claiming responsibility after the attacks, the Secret Organisation of Al-Qaeda in Europe, has not previously shown up on their radar screens beyond one mention on a website when they were demanding the withdrawal of Bulgarian troops from Iraq.

According to one former associate of Bin Laden, the wording of their statement was unusual. “Their description of the Prophet and also referring to an Arabic nation was not part of the culture of Al-Qaeda,” he said. “I think the attack was carried out by admirers of Bin Laden, not associates. He has become this kind of iconic hero to a lot of disgruntled people. They have probably never met him or anyone close to him.”

Other sources pointed out that Al-Qaeda is now a loose umbrella organisation since the post-September 11 crackdowns and many extremist groups are using the Al-Qaeda handle. “Everyone is flying in the air when they talk of Al-Qaeda,” agreed one former member now living in London. “We can’t say who is a leader, who is not, so there is an open window for anyone to claim they are.”

THE ROOT of the problem in the eyes of many foreign security operatives remains London’s reputation as a haven for extremists.

“It may not be the moment to say it,” said a defence ministry official in Paris, “but London is paying for its mistakes, for allowing all those radical organisations from Saudis to Pakistanis to set up shop in London, put out newsletters, make recruits and gather funds to finance their activities.”

Young men from Algeria and Morocco, including members of Islamist armed organisations, came to Britain in the early 1990s to escape persecution by the security forces in their home countries. They were granted asylum and some have since lived on welfare. Supporters of the Armed Islamic Group, known then as the GIA, used mosques such as Finsbury Park and Brixton, in south London, to raise funds to buy guns and bankroll a terror campaign that cost tens of thousands of lives in Algeria. They engaged in blackmail, drug dealing and credit card fraud to support their fundraising in London, Manchester and Birmingham.

In April 1994, after raids on GIA suspects in Paris, police found documents said to be “GIA communiqués” sanctioning the murder of Algerian police officers. Fax numbers were traced to London addresses in Southall, Mile End, Brixton, Finsbury Park and Richmond. A French investigating magistrate came to London to try to interview eight of those linked to the documents. But he was apparently blocked by the British authorities.

The French were so concerned about the role of the GIA and other groups in London that they authorised illegal spying operations against them in London - without telling the British.

Reda Hassaine, an Algerian journalist who came to Britain in the early 1990s, ended up working for MI5 and French intelligence, reporting on radicals inside the Muslim community. But Hassaine believes that despite huge efforts, the government and the security forces have been far too complacent in dealing with the threat.

For more than a decade, Hassaine says, Britain has been a “soft touch” for Islamist radicals who used it as a fundraising and propaganda base to launch attacks in Algeria and elsewhere: “The groups here now are much more independent of each other. There are plenty of them and they’ve been here in London for a long time.”

One former Algerian jihadi may hold the answer to the terrorist threat. When he was 24, Abdullah Anas reached a turning point in his life. A member of the Muslim Brotherhood and an imam, he had been brought up on stories of the long war for Algeria’s independence from France. Now he decided it was his turn to take up the gun for a cause: in his case, jihad.

Anas travelled to Peshawar in Pakistan and then walked for 40 days to northern Afghanistan. He lost most of his toenails, but “I felt I was reborn when I first got there . . . Even though I was sick for 10 days, I was so happy to be walking along with my Kalashnikov and with my brothers”.

He fought there for eight years, becoming close to Bin Laden. But he was eventually disillusioned. “I am proud God chose me to be part of that holy war. I went there prepared to become a martyr. But it was very sad for me to see that

once they had liberated their own land, they were unable to build their country. It was a big lesson for me," he said last week.

"I realised that Muslims can win the battle, but can't stabilise afterwards and win the peace. I saw it with my own eyes. I saw the same in Algeria, where my father and grandfather fought for freedom from the French, but once we had it, it fell to pieces. The Muslim fighters know how to die, but not how to live."

Anas was among the wave of Algerians receiving asylum in Britain. He learnt English and now works as a company secretary and teaches Arabic and Koranic studies. The board of trustees running Finsbury Park mosque since the overthrow of its radical regime regularly invites him to preach to congregations of 1,000.

His message is both outspokenly Muslim and adamantly against violence. London is a safe haven for Muslims, he says: "In some ways London is the closest thing we can get to the society described by the Koran. God said, I created you as many nations, tribes and languages. That is what we have here. None of us should seek to impose our views or values on the other."

He says this way of relating to life in London, as set down by the Prophet, is not simply a choice: "It is an obligation. We are part of this society and I tell my congregations that this is why I want them to know what the Prophet himself did. "Anyone targeting this society is my enemy. They are targeting me and my family as much as anyone else, no matter who they are." He added: "Like many Muslims I am angered by what the Americans are doing in Iraq or the Israelis do in Palestine. But injustices must be dealt with by scholars and politicians, not by hotheads. "These recruiters and terrorists, they are simply trying to use the anger of the young for their own agenda. Of course there is anger, but these criminals are trying to pervert it. I am not a hypocrite or an agent either of the United States or Bin Laden. This is my religion, what I believe in."

TURNING FROM BRITAIN'S YOUTH CULTURE TO ISLAM'S CERTAINTIES

- Sunday Times / Giles Hattersley

The biggest division among Britain's youth is no longer class, it's religion. For one group there is MSN, the X-box, T4, Jay-Z, Diamond White, Pot Noodles, Maybelline Great Lash mascara and sex. For the other there are five daily prayers, hijab, arranged marriages, a lifelong relationship with Allah and the spectres of honour killings and terrorism.

"We try not to separate ourselves," said Nirma Muslim, an 18-year-old Leicester schoolgirl. "But I have to admit that the majority of places me and my friends go are Islamic."

Is it that Muslim children have become more religious than their parents? Professor Akbar Ahmed, the world's leading authority on contemporary Islam, first noticed a shift towards militancy here in the 1980s. "The Muslim generation of the Sixties were more interested in making a name for themselves on the cricket field or in the literary field but now the equivalent generation want to make a name for themselves by going out and fighting a physical and violent jihad in the name of Islam."

Why? "Unlike American Muslims, British Muslims tend towards a much closer relationship with their motherlands and live in more detached communities. Because of globalisation, technology, and the media, they also have a sense of being a 'global Muslim'."

Zubair Patel, a 19-year-old Muslim of Indian descent studying for his A-levels at Regent sixth-form college in Leicester, thinks a generation of young men and women now of university age were shaped by 9/11.

"If you dressed like a Muslim at that time, people would hassle you in the street. It forced us to look for an identity and ask, 'Do I want to be in the mainstream or do I want to say I am Muslim?'" He started wearing the shalwar kameez (with a Burberry sweatshirt and a Prada beanie).

"I am not one of those Muslims who take part in the whole western thing, like drinking and drugs," he said. "Those people get portrayed as the moderate Muslims - like that's what you should be like if you're living in Britain."

"Some people get tempted to join in," said his friend Rabi Miah, 17. "But you have to look within yourself and decide that instead of a club you go out for dinner with your friends."

Zubair said: "I've been back to where my parents grew up in India and in their neighbourhood they had two mosques. Here we have four mosques on our street and an Islamic boarding school on the corner. They had two scholars, Leicester has 165. England has given us a greater chance to become more devout than our parents."

"It's sad in a sense, though," said Nirma. "Although we were born and brought up here, we are not experiencing Britain." "But what's the alternative?" asked Zubair. "Going clubbing and getting high?" He confessed: "I'd like to find it within myself to go up to any non-Muslim on the street and say, 'This is who I am. Who are you? Lets have a chat'." "It's harder to do than it sounds, though," said Rabi Miah.

As a child, Na'ima B Robert liked carol singing but never thought of herself as religious. "I was nominally feminist, and when I went on a trip to Egypt after a really wild summer before my second year of university I was bothered by the women in hijab. It was only when I asked one of them why she was covering up that it hit me. She said, 'I want to be judged for what I say and what I do - not what I look like'."

A year later Na'ima converted to Islam. A year after that she had guardians arrange a marriage. She felt liberated by her religion, and joined a growing number of Islamic feminists who feel hijab frees them from having to rely on beauty as their primary currency.

"Anyone who's ever smelt the reek of vomit on the side of the road can understand a little bit of the sense in the Koran," she said. "But more than that Islam answered the biggest question you have as a young person, 'Why are we here?'" Her friends and family were less pleased with her transformation. "My father was very upset. He felt like he would lose his daughter to Islam. Socially, my university friends and me were left with little in common. My religion is not something you do for two hours on a Friday. It's holistic and hard to sustain when you're not around people who help you."

Leaked No 10 dossier reveals Al Qaeda's British recruits

- Sunday Times / by Robert Winnett and David Leppard

Jul 10 2005 - Jul 10. Al Qaeda is secretly recruiting affluent middle class Muslims in British universities and colleges to carry out terrorists attacks in this country leaked Whitehall documents reveal.

A network of "extremist recruiters" is circulating on campuses targeting people with "technical and professional qualifications", particularly engineering and IT degrees.

Yesterday it emerged that last week's London bombings were a sophisticated attack with all the devices detonating on the Underground within 50 seconds of each other. The police believe those behind the outrage may be home-grown British terrorists with no criminal backgrounds and possessing technical expertise.

A joint Home Office and Foreign Office dossier, Young Muslims and Extremism, prepared for the prime minister last year, said Britain might now be harbouring thousands of Al-Qaeda sympathisers.

Lord Stevens, the former Metropolitan police chief, revealed separately last night that up to 3,000 British-born or British-based people had passed through Osama Bin Laden's training camps.

The Whitehall dossier, ordered by Tony Blair following last year's train bombings in Madrid, says: "Extremists are known to target schools and colleges where young people may be very inquisitive but less challenging and more susceptible to extremist reasoning/ arguments."

The confidential assessment, covering more than 100 pages of letters, papers and other documents, forms the basis of the government's counter-terrorism strategy, codenamed Operation Contest.

It paints a chilling picture of the scale of the task in tackling terrorism. Drawing on information from MI5, it concludes: "Intelligence indicates that the number of British Muslims actively engaged in terrorist activity, whether at home or abroad or supporting such activity, is extremely small and estimated at less than 1%."

This equates to fewer than 16,000 potential terrorists and supporters out of a Muslim population of almost 1.6m.

The dossier also estimates that 10,000 have attended extremist conferences. The security services believe that the number who are prepared to commit terrorist attacks may run into hundreds.

Most of the Al-Qaeda recruits tend to be loners "attracted to university clubs based on ethnicity or religion" because of "disillusionment with their current existence". British-based terrorists are made up of different ethnic groups, according to the documents.

"They range from foreign nationals now naturalised and resident in the UK, arriving mainly from north Africa and the Middle East, to second and third generation British citizens whose forebears mainly originate from Pakistan or Kashmir.

"In addition . . . a significant number come from liberal, non-religious Muslim backgrounds or (are) only converted to Islam in adulthood. These converts include white British nationals and those of West Indian extraction."

The Iraq war is identified by the dossier as a key cause of young Britons turning to terrorism. The analysis says: "It seems that a particularly strong cause of disillusionment among Muslims, including young Muslims, is a perceived 'double standard' in the foreign policy of western governments, in particular Britain and the US.

"The perception is that passive 'oppression', as demonstrated in British foreign policy, eg non-action on Kashmir and Chechnya, has given way to 'active oppression'. The war on terror, and in Iraq and Afghanistan, are all seen by a section of British Muslims as having been acts against Islam."

In an interview yesterday, Blair denied that the London terrorist attacks were a direct result of British involvement in the Iraq war. He said Russia had suffered terrorism with the Beslan school massacre despite its opposition to the war, and terrorists were planning further attacks on Spain even after the pro-war government was voted out.

"September 11 happened before Iraq, before Afghanistan, before any of these issues and that was the worst terrorist atrocity of all," he said.

However, the analysis prepared for Blair identified Iraq as a “recruiting sergeant” for extremism. The Sunday Times has learnt that Britain is negotiating with Australia to hand over military command of southern Iraq to release British troops for redeployment in Afghanistan.

The plan behind Operation Contest has been to win over Muslim “hearts and minds” with policy initiatives including anti-religious discrimination laws. A meeting of Contest officials this week is expected to consider a radical overhaul of the strategy following the London attacks.

Stevens said last night at least eight attacks aimed at civilian targets on the British mainland had been foiled in the past five years and that none had been planned by the same gang.

The former Scotland Yard chief, who retired earlier this year, said that on one weekend more than 1,000 undercover officers had been deployed, monitoring a group of suspected terrorists.

He said that he believed last week’s attackers were almost certainly British-born, “brought up here and totally aware of British life and values” .

“There’s a sufficient number of people in this country willing to be Islamic terrorists that they don’t have to be drafted in from abroad,” he said.

The changing face of al-Qaida: “outsourcing” terror

- The Washington Post
- The Baltimore Sun
- The Seattle Times

Jul 10 2005 - Jul 8. If al-Qaida turns out to have been behind yesterday’s bombings in London, as British officials suggested, it would be further evidence of the changing face of the extremist group, terrorism analysts said. Al-Qaida, they said, is global, opportunistic, fragmented — and still very potent. The group’s battle against Western society is both a war and an evolving propaganda campaign.

Since 9/11, the pace of al-Qaida-sponsored attacks has quickened. They are now occurring globally at a rate of approximately once every three months, compared with less than once a year prior to 2001, according to Brian Jenkins, who has studied terrorism for more than three decades. At the same time, the number of casualties in each attack has been lower, he added.

These newer, smaller attacks are part of an emerging strategy by al-Qaida, said Michael Scheuer, a former head of the CIA’s Osama bin Laden unit and better known as the author of “Imperial Hubris,” which critiqued the government’s anti-terror policies.

The older part of the al-Qaida strategy, the more massive, 9/11-style attacks, often involved many years of planning. The second, more recent phase, is part of a violent campaign against U.S. allies that al-Qaida has vowed to attack.

“This is a whole different campaign,” Scheuer said of attacks in Madrid, in Bali and elsewhere “This is designed to attack our allies.”

Now more a brand than a tight-knit group, al-Qaida has responded to four years of intense pressure from the United States and its allies by dispersing its surviving operatives, distributing its ideology and techniques for mass-casualty attacks to a wide audience on the Web, and encouraging new adherents to act spontaneously in its name.

As in the Madrid rail bombings, these looser adherents sometimes copy al-Qaida’s signature method of simultaneous explosions against symbolic or economic targets, an approach repeatedly advocated by al-Qaida founder bin Laden in his recent recorded speeches. Al-Qaida’s evolution from headquarters-planned conspiracies toward diffuse ideological incitement and tactical support is consistent with bin Laden’s long-stated goal.

For years, bin Laden has emphasized his desire to be remembered as a vanguard, an inspiring leader whose spark would light a spreading fire among all the world’s Muslims, causing them to revolt en masse against Christians, Jews and their allies in the Middle East. During the past year, the thinking of bin Laden and other key fugitive leaders — as communicated in taped addresses and on password-protected Internet message boards — has been influenced by the course of the war in Iraq. Last November, Iraq-based terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi pledged allegiance to bin Laden, and by doing so created at least the appearance of a unified al-Qaida approach to the war.

Indeed, al-Zarqawi’s pledge to bin Laden has offered a model of the new kind of al-Qaida outsourcing. “From al-Qaida’s point of view, it makes it look like they’re in on the biggest action going right now in Iraq,” said a former U.S. intelligence official, speaking on condition of anonymity. “From Zarqawi’s point of view, it’s brand recognition — you’re a franchisee.”

Both bin Laden and al-Zarqawi have emphasized two prominent themes in their approach to the Iraq war: driving a wedge between the United States and its allies, and bleeding American and allied economies.

Bin Laden and some of his lieutenants have strongly emphasized economic issues related to Iraq in recent postings and speeches. In his videotaped speech to the American people last November, on the eve of the U.S. election, he boasted of "the success of the bleed-until-bankruptcy plan."

In waging these smaller attacks, Scheuer said, al-Qaida is trying to turn the people of those countries against their U.S.-aligned government. If the attacks were much larger, he said, they would risk rallying those countries around their governments. But that should not comfort Americans, he cautioned. "They're saving the big one for us. We are their main enemy," he said. "The people who assume this is all they can do are kind of whistling past the graveyard."

Other analysts said there is a perception, deserved or not, that the United States is harder to penetrate, so al Qaeda-inspired jihadists are going elsewhere — for now.

The smaller attacks also keep the group and their cause in the public eye, said Jenkins. "In the meantime, it is imperative for them that they continue operations not simply for what it does to us, but for what it does for them," Jenkins said, namely, attracting new fighters and financing.

The group that claimed responsibility for the bombings, "Secret Organization of al-Qaida in Europe," is unknown to analysts who track terrorism, and government officials have not yet identified the perpetrators of the attacks. This new organization would fit the post-9/11 trend of al-Qaida's becoming a movement of loosely affiliated, ad-hoc groups.

The European terror infrastructure may actually be expanding. Freshly trained terrorists, or jihadists, appear to be returning to Europe from the war in Iraq, said David Kay, former chief U.S. weapons inspector in Iraq. Thomas Sanderson, deputy director of the Transnational Threats Project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, has spent the past several months researching Kay's concern.

"There's no doubt about it that there could be a connection" between the London bombings and the Iraq-trained jihadists migration to Europe, he said. He cautioned, however, nothing can be said conclusively until more is known about who was behind the attacks.

"I do not really believe there is such a thing as al-Qaida, the organization; there is al-Qaida, the mindset," said Yosri Fouda, senior investigative reporter in London for the al-Jazeera satellite television network, the only journalist known to have interviewed Sept. 11 planners Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and Ramzi Binalshibh. "This is what I find much scarier. Your ability to predict is reduced to a minimal level."

Police warn Bombers could be lining up new terror attacks

- Scotsman / by Alan Roden

Jul 10 2005 - Jul 9. Senior police sources fear the terrorists behind the London bombings are still at large and could strike again. As the massive manhunt for the killers was stepped up, officials warned the bombers may target Britain for a second time, taking confidence from the fact their original plans had worked. The news comes as Prime Minister Tony Blair today conceded that security measures alone cannot protect the UK from further attack and said the underlying causes of terrorism must be "pulled up by the roots".

Mr Blair said that "all the surveillance in the world" cannot stop people going on a bus to blow up innocent people.

One senior al-Qaida member has been named as a key suspect in the hunt for those behind the London terrorist attack. Mohammed al Gerbouzi, 45, the head of the Group of Islamic Combatants of Morocco, has been linked to last year's Madrid train bombings and other terrorist atrocities in Casablanca.

New information has also emerged on the timing of the explosions on the Underground.

Police said they now believed that the bombs went off within around five minutes of each other, the first at Edgware Road station at 8.50am. This was originally logged as a person under a train, but by 9.17am police had realised that it was a bomb.

The second blast, between Aldgate and Liverpool Street on the Circle Line, came at 8.51am, with the third, on the Piccadilly Line train between King's Cross and Russell Square, at 8.56am. The bus explosion in Tavistock Square came at 9.47am. A senior Scotland Yard source said that investigators were assuming that "the people who did this are still out there. They could do it again". A second attack would fit the pattern of recent al-Qaida activity in Europe, they said. Spanish security forces discovered a second stash of bombs after the Madrid bombings in March 2004.

The terrorist suspects blew themselves up in a shoot-out with Spanish police. And in November 2003, the HSBC bank and the British Consulate in Istanbul were attacked five days after two synagogues in the city had been bombed.

A police source has been reported as saying: "Our main fear is that this group is out there still sitting on a cache of high explosives knowing that their bomb designs worked. "We know from the two most recent atrocities in Europe that those groups always intended to make two attacks. Instead of going for perfect synchronicity in one spectacular, they have tried to hit the same target twice." One senior anti-terrorist official added: "The worrying thing is they live to fight another day."

Police now believe only one bomber died in the London blasts - when he blew himself up on a double-decker bus and killed 13 people. The others are thought to have left their bombs, which were hidden in rucksacks and fitted with timed fuses, on the floors of three trains before escaping.

But the massive operation to find the murderers was hit by a setback yesterday, when it emerged the CCTV cameras on the Number 30 bus were either faulty or not switched on, meaning vital clues have been missed.

But police and intelligence services from around the world have volunteered to help find the terrorists. New York mayor Michael Bloomberg said the US would share intelligence with the British, while a team from Spain is already heading to London, bringing expertise acquired in the wake of the Madrid train attacks.

Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Ian Blair said police had "implacable resolve" to track down terrorists and "will bend every sinew" in the search. He said forensic investigation suggests each of the bombs had less than ten pounds of high explosive.

Mohammed al Gerbouzi is said to have been living with his family in Britain for 16 years. It is understood he was granted indefinite leave to remain in the country, despite warnings from Morocco that he posed a threat. As head of the Group of Islamic Combatants of Morocco, he has been linked to the Madrid atrocities and bombings in Casablanca two years ago when 40 people died. A former pupil of cleric Abu Qatada - said to be Osama Bin Laden's European ambassador - Gerbouzi is alleged by the Spanish authorities to have spoken to some of the Madrid bombers twice in the hours before they blew themselves up as police closed in. Gerbouzi lived in England with his wife and children, but it is understood he vanished from his London flat in April last year. Last night, his family strongly dismissed claims that he is linked to the bombings. A family member said: "The police are always pointing the finger. It is never true."

Meanwhile, Prince William, who is thousands of miles away on tour with the British Lions in New Zealand, also signed a book of condolence at the British Consulate-General in Auckland today.

London's Extremist Radio Tajdeed Off the Air

- Clandestine Radio Watch / by Nick Grace

Jul 10 2005 - Jul 10. London-based Party for Islamic Renewal, a Saudi exile group sympathetic with and widely believed to be tied to the Saudi branch of al Qaeda, has pulled its Radio al-Tajdeed (Radio Islamic Renewal) off the air. Clandestine Radio Watch (CRW) noted the removal of the audio feed on July 9.

An announcement on the group's Web site, tajdeed.net, and translated from Arabic by CRW states:

"In the Name of Allah, the Benificent, the Merciful.

"And the prayer and greeting on the militants' master and the inexperienced leader, auspicious Mohamed Bin Abdullah, peace be upon him. "Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you.

"And till now... We wish to draw the attention of our noble pioneers that the site of the Tajdeed forum and Islamic recordings is closing because of an artistic failure in some server issues and not, as it has been spread, because of the recent events that befell Britain or because of the intervention of the authorities. The matter does not exceed that it is an artistic failure. "The site will return during the coming hours, God willing, just after the change of the damaged pieces with new ones.

"The Renewal site administration"

While the live Internet feed remains offline the Tajdeed audio recordings section and forum message board are accessible. In fact a message posted to the forum message board on at 5:14 am on July 7, 2005, is an announcement of a new 46-minute video from "the Media Department of al-Qaeda."

www.tajdeed.org.uk/forums/showthread.php?s=3856c4cc1b989a3c7d7eec24fbc25457&threadid=36346

The video is hosted on multiple servers and Web sites and begins with archival footage of Usama bin Laden, footage of warfare from Iraq and an Arabic-language statement of a kidnapped government official inside Iraq. Among the sites that host the video is

<http://www.alafiam.net/Wdki/index.htm>

Shortly thereafter a post titled "A series of explosions shake London" announces initial media reports of the explosions and asks "Did Abu Musab (al-Zarqawi) execute his threat?"

www.tajdeed.org.uk/forums/showthread.php?s=3856c4cc1b989a3c7d7eec24fbc25457&threadid=36716

Later in the morning another post states "(T)he British are extremely spiteful and have a hatred of Islam and Muslims and are from the colonial power that had the most negative influence on the Islamic Nation..." It goes on to discuss the history of Israel and Palestine.

CRW could not find condemnation of the terrorist strike on the Tajdeed message board or Web site.

Radio al-Tajdeed, which is transmitted to the Middle East over the French Eutelsat Hotbird satellite from studios in London, is sponsored by Mohammed al-Massari and funded through donations collected from listeners. The station was raided on May 6 by British authorities in connection to an investigation of suspected ties with the kidnapers of an Australian national inside Iraq. On May 21 it broadcast a speech by "Sheik" Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.

Al-Massari is a vocal critic of the West despite his legal residence in the U.K. Since the 1990's he has fronted several organizations in the U.S. and Europe that had ties to al Qaeda and Usama bin Laden. In 1996 he helped Khalid al Fawwaz, who participated in the 1998 African embassy terror attacks, set up a press office for bin Laden in London.

Among his associates is Saad Rashed Mohammed al-Fagih, whose own radio program, Sawt al-Islah (Voice of Reform), returned to the airwaves on July 7 from the same Eutelsat satellite used by Radio al-Tajdeed. Al-Fagih was declared a Specially Designated Global Terrorist by the U.S. Department of State in December 2004. In fact, the widely reported declaration of responsibility for the London terror strike by the "Secret Organization of al Qaeda in Europe" was posted on Al-Qa'ah (The Castle), which is run by al-Fagih.

Another close associate of al-Massari is Sheikh Omar Bakri Mohammed, who runs al-Muhajiroun (The Immigrants), an extremely vocal group in London and New York City that advocates international jihad for "the worldwide domination of Islam" and declared the UK "immune" from Islamist terror. Richard Reid, the Trans-Atlantic shoe bomber, and Zacarias Moussaoui, widely believed to have been the 20th September 11 hijacker, were members of the group.

Authorities in Pakistan, according to local press reports, have detained and are interrogating Zeeshan Siddique, a 25-year old British national, as a possible link to Thursday's attack. Siddique is reportedly a member of al-Muhajiroun. Both al-Fagih and Bakri Mohammed have appeared on Radio al-Tajdeed programs.

Unlikely to be by British Muslims

- Informed Comment / Juan Cole

Jul 10 2005 - Jul 9. AP is reporting that London police have issued new conclusions about the July 7 London bombings. The three subway bombings were virtually simultaneous, suggesting that they were coordinated somehow (or maybe the timers had just been set for the same time). It is a little unlikely that they used cell phone detonators since the phones don't always work in the Underground. This AP report is now saying that the plastic explosives were in fact powerful and sophisticated, contrary to earlier reports. The 49 dead cannot even be identified because of the force of the blasts.

CNN ran a piece Saturday in the US with Peter Bergen, speculating on the "chilling" possibility that the bombers were Muslim British subjects with UK passports. I have to say that I was outraged and appalled by this piece of potentially destructive speculation.

First, we still have no idea who did this. It is very likely the "Qaeda al-Jihad in Europe" group that claimed responsibility immediately. Their statement appeared very quickly after the bombings and yet had none of the appearance of being rushed. That suggests it was carefully composed before the fact. The rumors that the statement has errors in the Arabic or the Quran citation are absolutely incorrect, and al-Sharq al-Awsat came to the same conclusion in its Saturday edition.

The statement was in Arabic. The instances of British Muslim participation in terrorism given in the CNN piece were all non-Arabs: Richard Reid and several South Asian British, *all* of whom undertook operations abroad rather than in the UK. None of them probably even knew Arabic well or could compose a statement in it. Britain's South Asian Muslim community is almost certainly not the origin of this attack. The statement celebrated Arabness or 'urubah along with Islam. No Bangladeshi-Briton or Pakistani-Briton wrote that.

The statement was probably not written by a second-generation Arab Briton or even by a long-term, integrated Arab Briton resident. So, if the statement is a guide to the identity of the attackers, *this bombing could not have emanated from the British Muslim community.*

I did a keyword search in OCLC Worldcat, an electronic database with 40 million volumes, for 'urubah and Islam. Virtually all of the hits came from Egyptian Muslim thinkers publishing in Cairo and Giza during the past 30 years, roughly in a Muslim Brotherhood tradition. Egyptian Muslim revivalist intellectual Muhammad Amara wrote the big book on Uruba and Islam. Likewise, there was a book on Islam and uruba in Darfur, presumably supporting the Sudanese government (the Fur of Darfur are Muslims and often know Arabic, and the Arabic-speaking Sudanese living there are a minority, with whom the Fur will intermarry. The Arabic speakers, who look just like the Fur in being black Africans, have engaged in predations against the Fur in the past few years, with tens of thousands killed, even as some of the Fur sought greater regional autonomy from Khartoum).

My guess is that the author of the statement is Egyptian or Sudanese, with some sort of intellectual genealogy in the radical fringes of the Muslim Brotherhood, perhaps al-Zawahiri's al-Jihad al-Islami.

Of course, all of this is premised on the statement being a guide to the perpetrators, which we cannot know for sure. But everything else above follows pretty tightly if it is.

IntelCenter: LONDON TUBE BUS ATTACK

- IntelCenter / Voice (703) 370-2962 / Fax (703) 370-1571
PO Box 22572 / Alexandria, VA 22304-9257 / USA

Jul 10 2005 - Jul 9. IntelCenter has released "London Tube Bus Attack v1.2". The report provides a breakout of data related to the 7 Jul. 2005 attack on the London subway and bus system. It also provides background and context information. It is a working document and frequent updates will be issued over the near future.

LONDON'S ISLAMISTS UNUSUALLY MUM

- The Washington Times / by Seth Rosen

Jul 9 2005 - Jul 9. London's notoriously outspoken Islamists, a media-savvy faction who have publicly praised the September 11 hijackers and called for Islamic law in Britain, have fallen unusually silent since Thursday's rush-hour attack on commuters.

Sheik Omar Bakri Mohammed, the radical cleric known for giving his cell phone number to reporters, did not answer yesterday or the previous day. The Web site of the sheik's followers was offline, and Anjem Choudhary, his top assistant, refused to comment on the blasts that left scores dead.

In contrast, Muslim clerics and residents of London condemned the bombings without reservation, including one of Mr. Bakri's supporters. "My reaction is the same as the British public — it is an act of terrorism and I'm deeply saddened," said Abu Bakar Siddique. "Many innocents lives were lost and many Muslims died."

In his lectures and interviews, Mr. Bakri often walks a fine line between the right to preach and the criminal offense of incitement of violence. He has repeatedly called the September 11 hijackers "magnificent," and in Internet sermons, as reported by the Times of London, he implores Muslims to fulfill their "duty" of jihad and to support the mujahideen abroad.

Mr. Bakri defended the March 2004 Madrid train bombing, and said that British Muslims should "kill and be killed" for Islam. To his young supporters, he provides religious guidance and advises them on how to survive in what they perceive as a corrupt and racist society. His detractors say that behind the cryptic language is an extremist whose incendiary sermons radicalize disenchanted youth.

"Do they think they can continue in this anarchism without paying the price?" Mr. Bakri asked more than 60 men who filled a community center in East London in March. No more than a handful were over 25.

The Syrian-born Mr. Bakri was expelled from Saudi Arabia in 1986 for his inflammatory preaching and involvement in the extremist group Hizb ut-Tahrir. He eventually settled in London.

He rose to notoriety during the 1991 Persian Gulf war, when he said Prime Minister John Major would be a legitimate target for assassination once on Muslim soil. His public invective became too much for the Hizb ut-Tahrir leadership, and in 1996 he resigned and formed Al-Muhajiroun. Al-Muhajiroun disbanded in October 2004, amid a spate of public criticism and heightened scrutiny by British authorities, even though the sheik has continued to preach.

During an interview earlier this year at a McDonald's in East London, Mr. Choudhary predicted there was a very high risk of a terror operation happening in the coming months. "Someone will take it into their own hands," he said. "I think it is just a matter of time. "The Muslim community is under siege ... and it is an obligation for every Muslim to prepare themselves mentally and physically for any outcome and eventuality," he said.

Clues Emerging in London Bomb Blasts

- AP / by Paisley Dodds
- The Guardian

Jul 9 2005 - Jul 9. Police issued a stunning revision Sunday, shrinking the time between deadly explosions in the London Underground to just seconds, not 26 minutes as first reported, and saying the blasts were so powerful that none of the 49 known dead has yet been identified.

Many bodies still lay buried in a rat-infested subway tunnel and frantic relatives begged for word about others still missing in the worst attack on London since World War II.

Investigators also said the bombs that brought the British capital to a standstill Thursday were made of sophisticated high explosives. While it was possible the explosives were industrial or military materials obtained on the black market, investigators said it was too early to pinpoint where the terrorist bombers got the ingredients.

Investigators declined to say if they were looking for specific suspects, but repeated their assertion that the bombings bore the signature of al-Qaida, the terror network blamed for the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States. The organization, headed by Osama bin Laden, has gained a reputation for sophisticated timing in its terror strikes.

"It will be some time before this job is completed and it will be done with all the necessary dignity to the deceased," said Andy Trotter of the British Transport Police.

Transit officials originally said the blasts occurred over a 26-minute span, but computer software that tracked train locations and electric circuits subsequently determined the first blast shattered the rush-hour commute at 8:50 a.m. in Aldgate station, east London, with the next two erupting within 50 seconds.

A fourth explosion tore through a double-decker bus near a subway entrance, killing 13 people, nearly an hour later. The attacks hit as President Bush and other G-8 leaders were holding a summit in Scotland and a day after London was named the host city for the 2012 Olympics.

Deputy Assistant Police Commissioner Brian Paddick said the near-simultaneous nature of the attacks indicated timers - not suicide bombers - set off the explosions. He cautioned, however, that the investigation was in an early stage and nothing had been ruled out.

As sobbing relatives held pictures and searched for missing loved ones at subway stations around the city, crews looked into reports of more than 1,000 people missing. While police said they expected the death toll to rise, a significant increase was not expected. Most of the missing-persons reports were not believed connected to the bombings.

More than 20 people injured in the blasts remained in critical condition, and an unknown number of bodies remained in the Russell Square subway tunnel, where heat, dust and dangerous conditions slowed crews trying to reach the corpses trapped beneath the wreckage. Many London subway lines run more than 100 feet below ground.

"It is a very harrowing task," said police detective Jim Dickie. "Most of the victims have suffered intensive trauma, and by that I mean there are body parts as well as torsos." Many of those who worked to recover bodies had done the same work during December's devastating tsunami in the Indian Ocean.

Forensics experts were relying on fingerprints, dental records and DNA analysis to identify the victims. To help with DNA matches, police were asking for hair samples from those believed to be family members of some victims.

Riders were returning to Underground stations, but warily and in smaller numbers.

"There's just less people," student William Palmer, 23, said at the Chancery Lane subway stop. "Everyone's looking around a little bit more."

The system was set for its first real test on Sunday when 20,000 cricket fans were expected to travel to the British capital for a match between England and Australia.

When asked about the claim of responsibility by a group calling itself The Secret Organization of al-Qaida in Europe, Prime Minister Tony Blair told the BBC on Saturday it was "reasonably obvious that it comes from that type of quarter."

Little was known about the group, but its name was attached to an Internet statement that claimed responsibility for the Madrid commuter train bombings that killed 191 people in March 2004, the last major terror attack in Europe.

A second claim appeared on a Web site Saturday, this one signed Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigades, a group whose name invokes the alias of Mohammed Atef, bin Laden's top deputy who was killed in a U.S. airstrike in Afghanistan in November 2001.

But terrorism experts said the group had no proven record of attacks, and noted it had claimed responsibility for events in which it was unlikely to have played any role - the 2003 blackouts in the United States and London that resulted from technical problems, for example.

At King's Cross station, near the site of the deadliest of the three subway bombings, service was partially restored on Saturday. Flowers and sympathy cards were piling up outside to honor the 21 known dead as the train was bombed between King's Cross and Russell Square stations.

A group of Muslims held a peaceful vigil outside St. Mary's Hospital on Saturday in solidarity with victims. About 20 people left bouquets for five patients being treated at the hospital, just yards away from the Edgware Road subway station where one of the bombs exploded.

"We must remember that terror is all around us these days, that terror has no homeland or nationality and no religion and that we all face the same problems together," said Iman Hassan Ali, from the Dar Al Islam Foundation. "We all want

to understand these incidents and today we are here to give our support to the victims and say that we will stand together despite terrorism.”

Al Qaeda's Smart Bombs

- New York Times / by Robert A Pape [professor of political science at the University of Chicago, is the author of “Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism.”]

Jul 9 2005 - Jul 9. While we don't yet know who organized the terrorist attacks in London on Thursday, it seems likely that they were the latest in a series of bombings, most of them suicide attacks, over the past several years by Al Qaeda and its supporters. Although many Americans had hoped that Al Qaeda has been badly weakened by American counterterrorism efforts since Sept. 11, 2001, the facts indicate otherwise. Since 2002, Al Qaeda has been involved in at least 17 bombings that killed more than 700 people - more attacks and victims than in all the years before 9/11 combined.

To make sense of this campaign, I compiled data on the 71 terrorists who killed themselves between 1995 and 2004 in carrying out attacks sponsored by Osama bin Laden's network. I was able to collect the names, nationalities and detailed demographic information on 67 of these bombers, data that provides insight into the underlying causes of Al Qaeda's suicide terrorism and how the group's strategy has evolved since 2001.

Most important, the figures show that Al Qaeda is today less a product of Islamic fundamentalism than of a simple strategic goal: to compel the United States and its Western allies to withdraw combat forces from the Arabian Peninsula and other Muslim countries.

The overwhelming majority of attackers are citizens of Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf countries in which the United States has stationed combat troops since 1990. Of the other suicide terrorists, most came from America's closest allies in the Muslim world - Turkey, Egypt, Pakistan, Indonesia and Morocco - rather than from those the State Department considers “state sponsors of terrorism” like Iran, Libya, Sudan and Iraq. Afghanistan produced Qaeda suicide terrorists only after the American-led invasion of the country in 2001. The clear implication is that if Al Qaeda was no longer able to draw recruits from the Muslim countries where there is a heavy American combat presence, it might well collapse.

What is common among the attacks is not their location but the identity of the victims killed. Since 2002, the group has killed citizens from 18 of the 20 countries that Osama bin Laden has cited as supporting the American invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq.

There is good evidence that this shift in Al Qaeda's scheme was the product of deliberate choice. In December 2003, the Norwegian intelligence service found a lengthy Qaeda planning document on a radical Islamic Web site that described a coherent strategy for compelling the United States and its allies to leave Iraq. It made clear that more spectacular attacks against the United States like those of 9/11 would be insufficient, and that it would be more effective to attack America's European allies, thus coercing them to withdraw their forces from Iraq and Afghanistan and increasing the economic and military burdens that the United States would have to bear.

In particular, the document weighed the advantages of attacking Britain, Poland and Spain, and concluded that Spain in particular, because of the high level of domestic opposition to the Iraq war, was the most vulnerable.

“It is necessary to make utmost use of the upcoming general election in Spain in March next year,” the document stated. “We think that the Spanish government could not tolerate more than two, maximum three, blows, after which it will have to withdraw as a result of popular pressure. If its troops still remain in Iraq after these blows, then the victory of the Socialist Party is almost secured, and the withdrawal of the Spanish forces will be on its electoral program.”

That prediction, of course, proved murderously prescient. Yet it was only one step in the plan: “Lastly, we emphasize that a withdrawal of the Spanish or Italian forces from Iraq would put huge pressure on the British presence, a pressure that Tony Blair might not be able to withstand, and hence the domino tiles would fall quickly.”

No matter who took the bombs onto those buses and subways in London, the attacks are clearly of a piece with Al Qaeda's post-9/11 strategy. And while we don't know if the claim of responsibility from a group calling itself the Secret Organization of Al Qaeda in Europe was legitimate, an understanding of Al Qaeda's strategic logic may help explain why that message included a threat of further attacks against Italy and Denmark, both of which contributed troops in Iraq.

The bottom line, then, is that the terrorists have not been fundamentally weakened but have changed course and achieved significant success. The London attacks will only encourage Osama bin Laden and other Qaeda leaders in the belief that they will succeed in their ultimate aim: causing America and its allies to withdraw forces from the Muslim world.

London blasts echo in Pakistan, 1 held

- Times of India

Jul 9 2005 - Jul 9. Pakistani authorities are interrogating a British national, Zeeshan Siddique, suspected of having links with al-Qaeda and militants in the UK, for his possible role in Thursday's serial bomb blasts in London. Security agencies had picked up the man from near Peshawar in May.

Though Siddique's links with some of the militants belonging with Al-Muhajiroun, a radical Muslim group in the UK, have been established, his association with the group as such has not been proved.

However, the interrogators have recovered several phone numbers from his possession allegedly linking him to al-Qaeda operatives, and feel he may be the missing link in the plot.

The interrogators have also recovered from him a CD containing programmes regarding circuit works, aeronautical mapping and digital simulation. He has reportedly disclosed to the interrogators, that he was a suspect in a failed plot to bomb pubs, restaurants and rail stations in London.

According to The Dawn , they are now focusing on a note in which Siddique states that one of his comrades had informed him that 'wagon' had now been called off. According to the paper, the reference to 'wagon' has prompted security officials to take a fresh look at the whole case with particular reference to the bombings in London's underground tubes.

Quoting official sources, the paper reported that the US and the UK security agencies are taking keen interest in Siddique, on whom they have a great deal of information , adding that lately the UK agencies had requested for his immediate deportation.

The interrogators feel that the suspect possesses a lot of information with him, but he works himself into a fit to avoid interrogation. "It is still premature to say anything. We believe that the guy is holding back a lot of information," the paper quoted an investigator. Till now he has revealed only a little, he added.

What the bombings mean

- Oxford Analytica
- Forbes

Jul 9 2005 - Jul 8. Comparisons have inevitably been drawn between yesterday's attacks in London and the ones in Madrid last March. However, the points of contrast indicate that a less-sophisticated group probably carried out yesterday's atrocities.

1. The Madrid attacks killed 191 people and injured a further 1,700, compared to the current total of more than 50 killed and 700 injured (including less than 200 seriously injured) in London.
2. Whereas the Madrid attacks involved 13 explosive devices and the use of powerful industrial explosives, the London atrocities appear to have used a far smaller number of less-powerful devices that appear to have been less-effectively placed.
3. The London attacks exploded within a 58-minute period, failing to achieve the near-simultaneity of the Madrid atrocities, which is a hallmark of operations by al Qaeda and its regional affiliates. Lacking simultaneity and taking place after the height of the morning rush hour, the attacks were apparently not timed to strike the largest concentrations of unsuspecting commuters.
4. The Madrid attacks targeted the densely packed commuter trains of the overland network because they offered a less-surveilled environment than the Madrid metro. By contrast, the terrorists in London struck the underground transport system, along with a bus, increasing the prospects of their eventual identification and apprehension.

This indicates that the London attackers were less sophisticated than the Madrid attackers, the Moroccan Islamic Combat Group, and may have a far looser connection (if any) to the al Qaeda leadership. The perpetrators are most likely to have been small in number and to have included one or more veterans from an overseas jihad, who imperfectly mimicked the tactics of the Madrid attack.

If this is accurate, it would underline al Qaeda's transition in the past four years towards a decentralized structure that has become increasingly dependent on local groups to carry out operations. Indeed, since the Afghan War in 2001, one of network's greatest assets has been its logistical and operational flexibility in having no state to defend, which affords it a flat, transnational and clandestine organizational scheme with minimal physical infrastructure.

The Madrid bombings had the consequence of bringing down then-Prime Minister José María Aznar's government and changing Spain's policy on Iraq. The London bombings do not appear to have been specifically intended to coerce U.K. policy in the same way as Iraqi kidnappings of citizens from countries that provide troops in Iraq. Even had they been intended to serve this purpose, it is unlikely that they could effect the calculus of the U.K. government, much as IRA attacks failed to effect U.K. policy despite about two dozen mainland bombings since 1974.

The U.K. is already committed to undertake a drawdown of forces in southern Iraq in 2005 and 2006 to aid the deployment in Afghanistan. The bombings may worsen U.K. public antipathy towards U.S. President George Bush's administration for its perceived role in drawing the U.K. into Iraq. Thus the bombings may make pro-U.S. positions harder for Tony Blair's government to sustain.

However, no major changes are likely in the U.K.'s role in the global "war on terror," although the attacks will add weight to the Blair government's ability to recommend "soft power" solutions to the root causes of terrorism. Taking steps towards resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a key element.

While another attack in the U.S. remains the key al Qaeda objective, the U.K. will continue to be a major target due to its close support of U.S. policy in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as its longer-term colonial legacy and immigration ties with many present-day Islamist recruiting grounds. The Blair government will intensify its efforts to include more soft power elements in the war on terror, but U.K. foreign and security policy, including that towards Iraq, is unlikely to be substantially altered by the bombings.

Relatives fear worst, suspect's identity emerges

-Scotsman / Gethin Chamberlain

Jul 9 2005 - Jul 9. Frantic relatives and friends of people missing after the London bomb attacks were yesterday scouring the city in the hope that they might yet be found alive.

As the confirmed death toll rose towards 50 and continued to climb, they handed out photographs, put up posters and rang around hospitals in scenes reminiscent of those witnessed in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks in the US. By yesterday evening, an emergency phone number set up by police had received 104,000 calls from people worried about their relatives and friends.

Charles Clarke, the Home Secretary, and Sir Ian Blair, the Metropolitan Police Commissioner, both said that the bombings had all the hallmarks of al-Qaeda and warned that the terrorist cell responsible may still be in the country and planning further attacks.

Sir Ian said Thursday's bombings were "not only on London but on human beings from all over the world" and he pledged to do everything possible to catch the killers. "The implacable resolve of the Metropolitan Police is to track down those responsible for these terrible events. We will bend every sinew of the Metropolitan Police and all our associated agencies and comrades to do that," he said.

Police urged members of the public to act as their eyes and ears, to build up the intelligence picture by reporting anything out of the ordinary. "There's likely to still be a cell," said Sir Ian. "We must remain vigilant."

Last night, a Morocco-born man was emerging as a possible suspect. Reports in Brussels suggest that British security officials have been seeking information from European counterparts about Mohamed Garbuzi. An associate of the London-based radical cleric Abu Qatada, Garbuzi has been described by a Spanish judge as "Osama bin Laden's ambassador in Europe". Garbuzi was last year convicted in his absence by a Moroccan court and sentenced to 20 years for involvement in bomb attacks in Casablanca in 2003.

The Home Secretary said it was too early to be definite about the identity of the attackers, but confirmed early indications suggested that an al-Qaeda-linked group was responsible. "The fact is, the modus operandi, the nature of the events and the website claims, all of these give some substance to that being a strong possibility," he said.

Mr Clarke, who last night called a special meeting of his European counterparts in response to the bombings, stressed that the terrorist threat remained "live". "I have been very clear, the security services, the police have been very clear over a considerable period of time, that there is and was a substantial threat to this country," he said.

By last night, there were 49 people confirmed dead, but Sir Ian said that the final death toll would exceed 50, while being unlikely to rise above 100. He said that there were 700 casualties - 350 people were taken to hospital, 22 were still in a critical condition and one person died in hospital. Thirteen people were known to have died following the bus explosion.

Emergency services trying to get to the carriages inside the Underground tunnels faced considerable difficulties. "They are very challenging scenes. Our people are working under the most extreme circumstances," said Andy Hayman, Assistant Commissioner in charge of special operations for the Metropolitan force. Some bodies were still stuck in the wreckage of a Tube train in an unstable tunnel between King's Cross and Russell Square stations last night.

Police said that initial forensic investigations suggested that each device contained less than 10lbs of high explosive and they were probably carried in small bags and placed on the floor of the three Tube trains or, in the case of the bus, on the floor or a seat.

But speculation, fuelled by comments by Irish Premier Bertie Ahern, continued that the bus bomb may have been a suicide attack. "It now looks clear from intelligence that it was the first suicide bombing in the United Kingdom and that again would bring a whole new perception of how you deal with this kind of act," he said. Police said they had no evidence to suggest a suicide bomb attack, but added that nothing could yet be ruled out.

Scotland Yard's most experienced officers have been drafted in to the manhunt, which is already one of the force's biggest ever operations. They believe the attacks were the work of a terrorist cell rather than one individual, and officers confirmed the cell could still be active.

Sir Ian also said the timings meant the attacks could not have been carried out by one person acting alone.

Police have established that the Liverpool Street explosion happened 100 yards into a tunnel and the de-vice was in the third carriage of the train. In the explosion between King's Cross and Russell Square, the bomb was in the first carriage in the standing area by the first set of double doors. For the Edgware Road blast, the device was placed in the second carriage of the train in the standing area by the first set of double doors. In all, there were four bombs and police also carried out two controlled explosions.

Mr Hayman said they were "absolutely determined to identify and successfully prosecute the people responsible for this appalling event". He said: "We have the most experienced anti-terrorist officers on this case and we have the best community here in London to work with us."

A police source said: "CCTV is absolutely crucial here. Tubes run through many stations and the bus will have followed its route. The people who did this could have got on at any number of places. This is probably the largest CCTV recovery we have ever had to do."

Another key element is to follow up the hundreds of calls an anti-terrorist hotline has received since the bombings. Every single piece of information is being followed up by detectives - a process described by senior officers as "hugely important".

Meanwhile, despite the possibility of further attacks, many Londoners decided to head into the city to work yesterday, and the Queen delivered a defiant message to the terrorists behind the bombings.

"Those who perpetrate these brutal acts against innocent people should know that they will not change our way of life," she told staff at the Royal London Hospital in east London after visiting survivors of the blasts. "Atrocities such as these simply reinforce our sense of community, our humanity, our trust in the rule of law. That is the clear message from us all."

Describing the attacks as an outrage, she said she wanted to express her admiration for the people of London who were determined to resume their normal lives. And in a reference to the visits her own mother made to the East End during the Blitz, the Queen said: "Sadly we in Britain have been all too familiar with acts of terror and members of my generation, especially at this end of London, know that we have been here before." Other members of the Royal Family, including Prince Charles and his wife Camilla, and Prince Andrew, also visited the injured in hospital.

Radical Islamic websites and internet chatrooms were yesterday full of messages of support for the bombers and there were suggestions that supporters should phone in hoax bomb alerts to police stations in London and Europe to create more confusion. Two men were later arrested in the West Midlands in connection with hoax bomb calls.

In Britain, however, Islamic leaders criticised the terrorist atrocities as "inhuman" and worshippers attended mosques to pray for the victims. Muslims across Britain were urged to stay "calm and vigilant" amid fears of reprisals.

Sir Ian Blair said Muslim leaders had been quick to condemn the attacks. "This is a wonderful, diverse city and this is one London and one UK against this atrocity." Services on parts of the Underground network are unlikely to be restored for several weeks but Ken Livingstone, the London Mayor, urged commuters to soldier on. "I will use the Underground to go to work on Monday as normal and that is the advice I would give to every Londoner - that we should keep enjoying the city and living and working in the city."

Could London bombers be British Asians?

- Daily Star

Jul 9 2005 - Jul 9. The terrorist attack on London is feared to have been masterminded by a new breed of terrorists - young, well-educated British Asians loyal to Osama bin Laden, the British newspaper The Sun reports. Allegations are emerging that a terror cell based in the British Midlands is suspected of being behind the 4.5 kilogram bombs that destroyed three London Underground carriages and a double-decker bus on Thursday.

The group of Muslim extremists, composed mostly of former students in their 20s, have had their homes watched for months, but there has not been enough evidence to arrest them, The Sun wrote. Intelligence agents have reportedly monitored calls between the members and Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan.

A U.S. security source said: "The suspected cell is not the only one being looked at but is one of the most serious lines of inquiry. The suspects are British - disaffected graduates who graduated in the U.K., then went to Islamic schools in Pakistan, near the Afghan border." Security services tried to locate the gang Thursday following the attacks, but it is understood not all could be found.

Terror expert Professor Michael Clarke of King's College London, said planting a string of bombs would require a cell of 18 to 20 people.

Attacks underscore difficulty in thwarting terrorist groups

- Knight Ridder Newspapers / by Warren P Strobel

Jul 9 2005 - Jul 7. Perhaps the biggest surprise about Thursday's deadly attacks in London is that they didn't happen sooner. London, one of the world's most cosmopolitan cities, is home to an array of Islamic dissidents, peaceful and otherwise, and with terrorism continuing unabated elsewhere in the world, Great Britain has long been high on the target list for al-Qaida and related groups because of its government's staunch support for the U.S. war in Iraq.

Sir John Stevens, Britain's top police officer at the time, put it this way in March 2004: "There is an inevitability that some sort of attack will get through."

Thursday's bombings of three subway trains and a double-decker bus at rush hour illustrate one of the great frustrations of the war on terror: It's nearly impossible to defend against assailants who use relatively simple technology to shock and disrupt civilian life, U.S. officials and counterterrorism experts say.

"These attacks are a grim warning that the threat of terrorism remains all too real, that groups like al-Qaida are willing to attack civilians without reservation and that even the most experienced anti-terrorist force cannot provide security in open democratic societies," security expert Anthony Cordesman of the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies said in a statement.

While al-Qaida's core organization - sometimes known as "al-Qaida central" - has been on the run since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and stands denuded of much of its leadership, local groups inspired by it have popped up across the Middle East, North Africa and Europe.

Britain has long experience with terrorism from its three-decade battle with the Irish Republican Army, and its security services have disrupted several alleged plots by Muslim radicals over the last year and a half.

There were no definitive answers Thursday as to who was behind the string of London bombings.

But officials and experts agreed that it bore the calling card of groups associated with, or inspired by, Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

A previously unknown group, calling itself the "Secret Organization of al-Qaida in Europe," claimed responsibility in an Internet posting and warned Denmark and Italy to withdraw their troops from Iraq. The claim couldn't be immediately verified. A similarly named group, al-Qaida in Europe, claimed responsibility after the March 11, 2004, Madrid commuter train bombings, which killed 191 people.

Stephen Ulph, an Islamic affairs analyst for British-based Jane's Information Group, said the style and language of the letter on the Internet were similar to that of previous al-Qaida announcements. This was "probably a propaganda attack. To say 'we're still here,'" Ulph said by phone from his office in central London, a few blocks from one of the bombings. The attacks overshadowed the Group of Eight summit hosted by British Prime Minister Tony Blair and attended by President Bush several hundred miles away in Gleneagles, Scotland. But Ulph, who's affiliated with the Washington-based Jamestown Foundation, said the attacks were a failure strategically. "No great panic was caused by this," he said.

Later Thursday, U.S. government officials said there was growing consensus that all or most of the bombs weren't carried out by suicide attackers, but involved devices presumably timed or remote-controlled.

Beginning in 2003 and intensifying after the attacks on the Madrid commuter rail system, Londoners have been told repeatedly to prepare for similar attacks in their hometown. Again and again, the London Underground train system was described as "vulnerable."

London emergency workers held practice runs on how to respond to a terrorist attack on the subway. During the exercises, stretches of the Underground would be shut down, as police cadets pretended to be victims of an attack.

Police have broken up several plots. Last April, British security forces derailed a plot to flood sections of the subway with poison gas, or a so-called radioactive "dirty bomb." Police discovered a plan to release osmium tetroxide within the confines of the subway system, which officials said could have resulted in many deaths. Information on the alleged planned attack seemed to indicate a possible al-Qaida link.

Last August, British authorities also uncovered an alleged plot to set off a radioactive dirty bomb in London; they charged eight men with terrorism-related crimes.

One of them was Dhiren Barot, al-Qaida's reputed leader in Britain, who was alleged to have surveillance plans of buildings in New York, New Jersey and Washington that were the subject of a U.S. terror alert nearly a year ago.

London is also home to the Finsbury Park Mosque, where alleged Sept. 11 plotter Zacarias Moussaoui and "shoe bomber" Richard Reid worshipped. A radical cleric who used to preach there, Abu Hamza al-Masri, is on trial on 15 terrorism charges.

Stephen Gale, a counterterrorism expert at the Philadelphia-based Foreign Policy Research Institute, said London has "probably the largest concentration of al-Qaida sympathizers and cells in Western Europe."

But as to the attackers, Gale said, "Right now, we have no idea. And that's part of the problem. It's all ambiguous."

Details of Attack and Recovery Snags

- New York Times / by Alan Cowell

Jul 9 2005 - Jul 8. The death toll in London's worst day of terror in decades rose above 50 today, and the police gave the first details of the explosives that ripped through three subway trains and a bus Thursday morning. With an unspecified number of bodies still to be removed from one vermin-infested subway tunnel, British leaders - from royalty to left-wingers - evoked wartime images to urge resolve.

But there were fears, too, of a backlash against Muslims, after some British officials said the attacks had possibly been the work of Islamic terrorists. A spokesman for the Muslim Council of Britain, Shere Khan, said there were reports of a mosque being firebombed in Leeds, northern England, and of attacks on individual Muslims.

The bomb attacks on Thursday tore through the subway trains and a red double-decker bus - one of London's most familiar icons - at the height of the morning rush. Initial police estimates said 37 people had died, but the police said today that the death toll would exceed 50. Of the 700 people wounded, the police said today that 350 had minor injuries, that 350 had been taken to hospitals and that 100 had been hospitalized overnight.

As the police promised "implacable resolve" to bring the bombers to justice, members of the royal family toured hospitals, conjuring memories of wartime visits by their forebears over 60 years ago. Queen Elizabeth II offered her first public remarks on the bombings in unusually forthright tones. "Sadly, we in Britain have been all too familiar with acts of terror, and members of my generation, especially at this end of London, know that we have been here before," she said at a hospital in East London, an area that was bombed particularly heavily during the Second World War.

"But those who perpetrate these brutal acts against innocent people should know that they will not change our way of life," she said. "Atrocities such as these simply reinforce our sense of community, our humanity and our trust in the rule of law. That is the clear message from us all." she said.

Hundreds of extra police officers, some with dogs, patrolled London's streets today as flags flew at half-staff over public buildings like Buckingham Palace, where sightseers were not permitted their usual access to the front gates. Some people laid flowers near the sites of the bombings and others showed photographs of people they had not heard from since the explosions.

Trevor Ellery and his wife, Beverly, for instance, said their son Richard, 21, sent a text message to them at 8:30 a.m. Thursday, just before the carnage began. "We have had no contact with him ever since," Mr. Ellery told BBC television.

In the first account of investigators' findings, an assistant police commissioner, Andy Hayman, said that each of the four bombs had contained less than 10 pounds of "high explosive," small enough to have fit in a backpack. The explosives on the three subway trains had been left on the floors of the cars where they exploded about 100 yards from the stations at King's Cross, Liverpool Street and Edgware Road.

In the bombing near Liverpool Street station, the explosives had been left in the third car of a train, while in the train near King's Cross station, explosives had been left in the standing area of the first car. In the third blast, near Edgware Road, the bomb had been left in the second carriage near a set of double doors, Mr. Hayman said.

On Thursday, investigators said the three bombs in the subway had apparently been detonated by timers, not by suicide bombers. The fourth device might have been intended for a target other than the city bus that it destroyed.

The bomb on the bus near Russell Square - whose subway station was also an escape route for survivors of the King's Cross bomb - could have been left on the floor or a seat, Mr. Hayman said at a news conference today. Initially, the police said that two people had died in the bus bombing, but that figure was revised today to 13.

Some British newspaper reports quoted witnesses as saying they had seen a man on the No. 30 bus fiddling nervously with a bag that then exploded. It was unclear whether that was by accident or design.

The commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Sir Ian Blair, said that "we have absolutely nothing to suggest that this was a suicide bombing attack, although nothing at this stage can be ruled out."
"This has all the hallmarks of Al Qaeda, but we are at the beginning of a very complex investigation and there is nothing specific," he said.

"The implacable resolve of the Metropolitan Police is to track down those responsible for these terrible events," Sir Ian declared. "We will bend every sinew of the Metropolitan Police and all our associated agencies and comrades to do that."

A group calling itself the Secret Group of Al Qaeda's Jihad in Europe took responsibility for the attack in an Internet posting on Thursday that could not be verified, saying the bombings were punishment for Britain's involvement in American-led military campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. The group also threatened to attack Italy and Denmark for their support.

Mr. Hayman said police investigators were sifting through hundreds of hours of closed-circuit television footage from a large number of places and were gathering forensic evidence from the scenes of the blast.

Mr. Hayman said rescue workers and investigators were having difficulty getting to the scene of the explosion at King's Cross, where 21 people are thought to have died, because of "the threat of the tunnel being unsafe" and the presence of "vermin and other dangerous substances being in the air." The images he evoked were some of the most grisly in the aftermath of the bombings that left Londoners stunned.

The Evening Standard quoted an unidentified police officer who had seen the subterranean carnage. "I do not know what heaven looks like, but I have just seen hell," he said.

Another senior police officer, Andy Trotter, said that "the challenge is now the removal of the dead," describing the recovery of the unspecified number of corpses as a "very difficult task." He acknowledged that the authorities had considered closing down London's cellphone network, reflecting worries that the bombs had been triggered by cellphone signals, as they were during the March 2004 bombing in Madrid that killed 191 people. "We did consider it, as we have that ability," Mr. Hayman said. "But we assessed the threat to public confidence that could come with that as thousands and thousands of people were trying to find out whether people were involved."

Prime Minister Tony Blair, who had flown back from the Group of 8 summit meeting in Gleneagles, Scotland, and returned there in the evening, remained at the summit meeting today to complete its business.

Flanked by world leaders, who included Presidents Bush, Jacques Chirac of France and Vladimir Putin of Russia, he announced aid packages for both the Palestinian Authority and Africa. "We speak today in the shadow of terrorism, but it will not obscure what we have come here to achieve," Mr. Blair said. "There is no hope in terrorism nor any future for it," he said. "We offer the contrast with the politics of terror."

Although the prime minister expressed the opinion that the attacks might have been timed to disrupt the meeting of leaders of the Group of 8 nations in Scotland, Britons seemed increasingly inclined to interpret the attacks as a direct result of his support for President Bush in Iraq and America's campaign against terrorism.

"The price for being America's foremost ally, for joining President Bush's Iraq adventure, was always likely to be paid in innocent blood," Max Hastings, a military historian and former newspaper editor, wrote in the anti-government Daily Mail.

"We must acknowledge that by supporting President Bush's extravagances in his ill-named war on terror and ill-justified invasion of Iraq, Blair has ensured that we are in the front line beside the U.S., whether we like it or not," Mr. Hastings wrote.

Against that, though, many people sought to invoke the memory of Britain's bulldog spirit during World War II, when Londoners grew accustomed to German bombing and confronted it with gritty humor.

"If London could survive the Blitz, it can survive four miserable events like this," said Sir Ian of the Metropolitan Police. He spoke of "this wonderful great diverse city" and called London and Britain "one united community against atrocity."

But Massoud Shadjareh, a spokesman for Britain's Islamic Human Rights Association, said Muslims were worried that right-wing Britons might seek to exact reprisals for the attacks. "We have got extreme elements who are going to try something in the next few days, and we are asking the community to take precautions, especially women and children," he said.

Inayat Bunglawala, an official of the Muslim Council of Britain representing moderate Muslim opinion, said that in Leeds, in the north, a fire had erupted at a mosque and a Sikh temple had been attacked. The police in Leeds said they regarded the mosque fire, which occurred at 2 a.m. and caused minor damage, as "suspicious."

Mohamed Iqbal, a member of the city council, told the Press Association news agency that "it's difficult to say why this has been done, but, given the timing, people will jump to conclusions and think it might be related" to the London bombings.

Earlier, Muslim groups in Leeds sent a letter to Prime Minister Blair expressing their "deepest anger and sympathy at the terrible atrocities committed in London yesterday." "Such actions have no place in our society and we strongly and unequivocally condemn these barbaric actions which are an attempt to damage our democracy, freedom and community relations," the letter said. Some Muslims expressed hope that the culprits were not of their faith.

"There's nothing in what's happened that's anything to do with Islam," said Ismail Benakmoume, 30, a Muslim railway worker at Victoria station. "For now we are still waiting for the news of who really did it. I really hope it's not some Muslim who says: O.K., we've done it and it's in the name of God." Some people acknowledged heightened suspicion. "When you see someone walking along with a veil, you might be worried there's a stick of dynamite strapped underneath," said Terry Scanlon, 51, who runs a stall selling fruit and flowers at Victoria station. "But there's idiots in all races." For many, the day after the explosions was a nervous time, and some subway lines did not seem as busy as usual.

"I'm contemplating going down any minute now," said Terry Cacutt, 33, a computer programmer, who puffed a cigarette at the top of steps leading down to Victoria underground station. "I'm just having a cigarette and thinking about it, building myself up. It'll be alright after the first time, I think."

Some Londoners took the bombings in their stride, citing their long experience of Irish Republican Army attacks - but with the key distinction that the I.R.A. often issued warnings of when it would strike, and has observed a form of truce for more than eight years.

"We've seen all this before in a way," said Sgt. John Burnett, a police officer patrolling under the tall chestnut trees near where the bus was attacked. "We've been fighting the I.R.A. for years in London. So bombs are nothing new.

"But the difference is that I.R.A. provided some warning for their attacks. It seems the hallmark of these attacks is we get no warning, whatsoever. It was a matter of when, not if."

The blast spread worries across Europe, particularly in those lands that are seen as allies of the United States - Spain until last year, Italy and others.

"This should be a wake-up call for us all, since England has the best antiterrorism tradition in Europe," said Francesco Sidoti, a security expert at the University of L'Aquila in Italy. "We were unprepared."

"This has nothing to do with the old-style domestic terrorism that Europe is used to," he said referring to scattered acts of violence committed by groups like the Red Brigades in Italy.

Pakistan arrest offered hints, no details on planned hits

- The Washington Times / by Bill Gertz and Rowan Scarborough / Shaun Waterman of UPI contributed

Jul 9 2005 - Jul 8. The recent arrest of an al Qaeda terrorist in Pakistan provided some clues that terrorists were planning attacks on trains and buses, but there were no specific warnings of the bombings in London yesterday, U.S. officials said.

The lack of a specific warning highlights continuing U.S. intelligence shortcomings in spying on al Qaeda and related Islamist groups, which are suspected in the attacks.

"I'm not aware of any specific intelligence that suggested this was going to take place," Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff told reporters after the bombings.

Officials said the bombings likely were carried out by a "pop-up" cell of Islamic militants loyal to, and perhaps supported by, al Qaeda, delivering a stark reminder of how difficult it is to penetrate terror plots by groups that Western intelligence services have not identified.

A U.S. intelligence official said Washington was not aware of the "Secret Organization Group of al Qaeda Jihad Organization in Europe," which took responsibility for the four explosions in subways and a double-decker bus. A government terrorism expert also said the attack is part of a revival of militant activity in Europe as radical clerics recruit jihadists to fight in Iraq against the U.S.-led coalition, of which Britain is a key member.

"This is a manifestation of a trend we've seen over the past 18 months of greatly heightened al Qaeda and pro-al Qaeda activity in Europe designed mainly to recruit for the battlefields in Iraq and, more lately, in Afghanistan," said Kenneth Katzman, a terrorism expert at the Congressional Research Service.

Other intelligence officials said there have been few reports in recent months indicating possible attacks by Islamic terrorists in the United States or abroad. One U.S. security agency official said there had been some "extremely vague" intelligence reporting in the past several weeks indicating that al Qaeda was planning a "Madrid-style attack."

Al Qaeda-linked terrorists were behind the attack in Spain's capital on March 11, 2004, killing almost 200 people. The attacks involved 10 nearly simultaneous bombings of trains during rush hour, eerily similar to the London attacks.

The intelligence reports on possible train and bus bombings followed the May arrest in Pakistan of al Qaeda's No. 3 leader, Abu Faraj al-Libbi, who is now in U.S. custody, the official said.

"It was very generic stuff that mentioned that 'we would like to do what we did in Madrid' and target transportation systems," the official said.

A second U.S. official said that although there were no specific intelligence reports of an attack, "it was no secret that al Qaeda and like-minded associates were impressed with what happened in Madrid."

"That was an operation that didn't take much planning and resources but had an impact," the official said.

It is not known whether those responsible for yesterday's bombings were Islamists from Britain or from outside the country, the U.S. official said.

A senior U.S. intelligence official, in a briefing last night, said that although "we don't know who was responsible for the attacks," the method of attack suggested Osama bin Laden-inspired terrorism. "The attack methodology is consistent with what we know that al Qaeda has planned for in the past. We also see it as consistent with what

happened in Madrid, which was carried out by an al Qaeda-inspired group," he said. Britain's Muslim community in the past has provided a base for extremists, the official said.

Recent terrorist activity has included the attempt by Richard C. Reid, a British citizen and Muslim convert, to blow up a U.S. airliner with a shoe bomb and the arrest of Abu Issa al-Hindi, who was taken into custody in August in London, the official said. Al-Hindi was dispatched by al Qaeda in 2000 and 2001 to survey bombing targets in New York.

Former CIA Director R. James Woolsey said yesterday's bombings show the difficulties of getting intelligence about a pending attack. "I think it's always going to be unlikely that we're going to get specific tip-offs to specific times of specific attacks," Mr. Woolsey said. "They are just very difficult to penetrate, compared to, say, the Soviet government."

The attack underscores the advantages al Qaeda-affiliated groups have anywhere in the world. They can quickly form cells; plan attacks in basements, cafes or apartments; build rudimentary improvised explosive devices; and then execute mass killings without signaling their activities to intelligence services.

"There are fundamentalist groups out there who are bent on doing terrorist attacks, and they don't have to be highly sophisticated, like the 9/11 plot, which was very sophisticated, years in planning, with security, hijackings, flying airplanes," said the intelligence official, who asked not to be identified. "This may come down to a group of individuals who had backpacks on trains and buses and detonated themselves or were timed to go off."

"You have groups that pop up and then go away," the official added. "Some pop up and merge. It's impossible to know how many al Qaeda-affiliated groups there are in the world. It's an unknown factor."

Mr. Katzman said al Qaeda "is trying to regroup. I'm not buying into some of the theses I see out there that it is immutably atomized into local groups, local commanders. I think bin Laden is a warrior trying to bring back some sort of central direction to it."

Secret Internet chat room helped calm U.K. markets

- Reuters
- IHT

Jul 9 2005 - Jul 9. A secret Internet chat room run by Britain's financial regulators helped keep London's financial markets open after the bomb blasts Thursday, while financial firms activated security measures in case of further attacks.

The Bank of England, the Treasury and the Financial Services Authority switched on a secure section of their Financial Sector Continuity Web site to talk to major banks operating in the City of London's financial hub about how they were coping, they said Friday.

"In the light of yesterday's events the tripartite authorities have activated the contingency part of the Web site," the Treasury, Bank of England and the financial authority said.

The site, set up after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks in the United States, allows regulators to coordinate and communicate with the financial services sector if there is a devastating event such as the bombings Thursday of a London bus and three Underground trains.

The Web site has a secure section where the authorities can communicate directly with big banks that are critical to the stability of the international financial system.

"We, the authorities, were all in contact with each other and the financial infrastructure," a Bank of England spokeswoman said.

The City's financial markets, where currencies, stocks, bonds and commodities worth trillions of dollars are exchanged daily, kept operating despite disruption from the blasts.

"Contingency planning by banks has increased considerably in last three years, post Sept. 11, and what yesterday shows is that the planning has worked," said David Key, crises management practice leader at Control Risks Group, which advises many banks on crisis and security management.

The Swiss financial services group UBS, for example, briefly evacuated its building on Liverpool Street, which houses bond and currency desks, but contingency plans ensured that trading was not affected.

"Banks' internal security teams have got better and more sophisticated as they have invested in best practice," Key said. "There has also been a move away from the traditional focus on security towards risk management."

Police shot bombers

- NZ Herald

Jul 9 2005 - Jul 9. A New Zealander working for Reuters in London says two colleagues witnessed the unconfirmed shooting by police of two apparent suicide bombers outside the HSBC tower at Canary Wharf in London. The New Zealander, who did not want to be named, said the killing of the two men wearing bombs happened at 10.30am on Thursday (London time). Following the shooting, the 8000 workers in the 44-storey tower were told to stay away from windows and remain in the building for at least six hours, the New Zealand man said. He was not prepared to give the names of his two English colleagues, who he said witnessed the shooting from a building across the road from the tower.

Reports of attacks carried out by suicide bombers have been rife in London. Canada's Globe and Mail newspaper reported an unconfirmed incident of police shooting a bomber outside the HSBC tower. Canadian Brendan Spinks, who works on the 18th floor of the tower, said he saw a "massive rush of policemen" outside the building after London was rocked by the bombings.

Israel: UK didn't dig deep enough in uprooting Islamists

- Jerusalem Post / Arie O'Sullivan

- Spy News newsletter and discussion list / by Mario Profaca

Jul 9 2005 - Jul 8. Conforming to the restrained British character, Thursday's attacks are more likely to lead to measured, surgical steps against terrorists rather than bombastic crackdowns, Israeli counter-terrorism analysts say.

A former senior IDF intelligence officer said the attack was probably linked with al-Qaida and should serve as a catalyst for setting up a global counter-terrorism headquarters. The terror attacks were also likely greatly helped by sleeper cells inside Britain, one analyst said. Maj.-Gen. (res.) Ya'acov Amidror, a former chief of IDF intelligence assessment, said that post-9/11 - with the exception of Madrid - the West had been able to foil attempted al-Qaida attacks.

Except for Madrid, all major al-Qaida attacks since September 11 were in either Muslim countries or poorly functioning countries like Kenya.

"The key to fighting this global terror network is closer cooperation between the various security agencies in the world," Amidror told Army Radio from London, where he was touring. Moti Cristal, an expert in negotiation and a fellow at the Institute for Counterterrorism at the Herzliya Interdisciplinary Center, said British security had not been caught sleeping, but rather didn't root out terror cells with enough resolve.

"In the past two years, they have arrested several cells. But this attack shows they didn't go deep enough and this is mainly due to legal and cultural restrictions. Now they will be much freer to go deeper," Cristal predicted.

Cristal explained that British attempts to enact antiterrorism measures following the attacks of September 11 were "bashed by the House of Lords and the liberal nature of the British people. Now this attack will provide a very important backing for their government to do what they know they should do and this is to take much more countermeasures and surgical operations without breaking the very delicate relationship with Britain's Muslims."

He added that the attack was not aimed at influencing certain events and had no immediate political goal. This is in contrast with the Madrid bombings, which were scheduled to influence Spain's national elections and pressure the country to remove its troops from Iraq.

Cristal believed the timing was more likely linked to the announcement of London as the host of the 2012 Olympic Games than the G8 gathering in Scotland.

"They did it to humiliate the British and to show the world how vulnerable London is. It was anger, revenge and punishment for what they conceived as British arrogance and support for the United States."

Cristal said that retaliation by Britain was not an issue.

"It's about preventing the next attack. The big challenge the Brits are facing now is to use this chance to redefine the balance between human rights and measures against terrorism," he said.

Dr. Hanan Shai, a lecturer on military and security at the Hebrew University, said care needed to be taken to prevent the terrorists from achieving their aim of forcing the West to destroy itself by limiting freedoms.

"In the long run, their great achievement is to cause a blow to individual rights. Success for them would be for modern Western society, by its own hand, to turn into a totalitarian one," Shai said. "From attack to attack we become less pluralistic."

Still, he advocated a stronger stand against suicide bombers. The report that at least one of the bombs in London was set off by a suicide bomber should awaken the need to tackle the outdated rules of war which ignore terrorists' violations of morality, he said.

"In the Second World War, military leaders ran the world. In the Cold War, it was run by diplomatic leaders. During the war on terrorism, the intellectuals needed to take a leadership role, but they have not. Instead of reexamining the rules of morality against non-conventional weapons, such as suicide bombers, they are attacking [US President George W.] Bush and [British Prime Minister Tony] Blair," Shai said.

Attacks Bear Earmarks Of Evolving Al Qaeda

- The Washington Post / by Steve Coll and Susan B. Glasser / Researcher Julie Tate contributed
- CCISS / by Martin Rudner

Jul 9 2005 - Jul 8. After Sept. 11, 2001, the world learned that counterterrorism specialists had seen that kind of attack coming, they just did not know when and where it would take place. In a similar sense, they saw yesterday's London bombings coming, too; they have been warning of such a strike on European soil for much of this year.

It took only a few hours for British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw to conclude that the assault bore the "hallmarks of an al Qaeda-related attack." And while investigators were still sifting through the evidence, the available facts — the British venue, the soft targets with economic importance, the timing during the Group of Eight summit in Scotland and the relatively simple operational techniques — conformed almost precisely to the methods of what specialists describe as an evolving al Qaeda movement.

Now more a brand than a tight-knit group, al Qaeda has responded to four years of intense pressure from the United States and its allies by dispersing its surviving operatives, distributing its ideology and techniques for mass-casualty attacks to a wide audience on the Internet, and encouraging new adherents to act spontaneously in its name.

Since the 2003 invasion of Iraq, terrorism experts in and out of government have warned that the movement has appeared to gain ground, particularly in Europe, where a large, mobile, technology-savvy and well-educated Muslim population includes some angry and alienated young people attracted to the call of holy war against the West.

The simultaneous bombings of four rush-hour commuter trains in Madrid on March 11, 2004, the shooting death of Dutch filmmaker Theo Van Gogh last November and recent preemptive arrests made by Euro-pean police suggest a less top-down, more grass-roots-driven al Qaeda. The movement's ability to carry off sophisticated, border-crossing attacks such as those Osama bin Laden and his lieutenants mounted against New York and the Pentagon almost four years ago appears diminished, some experts say.

Yet al Qaeda's chief ideologues — bin Laden, his lieutenant Ayman Zawahiri and, more recently, the Inter-net-fluent Abu Musab Zarqawi - have been able to communicate freely to their followers, even while in hiding. In the past 18 months, they have persuaded dozens of like-minded young men, operating independently of the core al Qaeda leadership, to assemble and deliver suicide or conventional bombs in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Spain, Egypt and now apparently London.

As in the Madrid bombings, these looser adherents sometimes copy al Qaeda's signature method of simultaneous explosions against symbolic or economic targets, an approach repeatedly advocated by bin Laden in his recent recorded speeches.

"No more 9/11, but lots of 3/11, especially in Europe," declared the final slide in a PowerPoint presentation about al Qaeda's evolution presented at numerous U.S. government forums this year by terrorism specialist and former CIA case officer Marc Sageman, a clinical psychologist who has recently studied al Qaeda's European cells.

The British bombings "seem to be very much consistent with a Sunni jihadist movement that is overall as strong as ever but more decentralized, in which attacks are being instigated and carried out in more places than just the core leadership hiding in their caves in South Asia," said a former senior U.S. intelligence official.

Al Qaeda's evolution from headquarters-planned conspiracies toward diffuse ideological incitement and tactical support is consistent with bin Laden's long-stated goal for the organization he founded on an Afghan ridge in the summer of 1988. For years, bin Laden has emphasized his desire to be remembered as a vanguard, an inspiring leader whose spark would light a spreading fire among all the world's Muslims, causing them to revolt en masse against Christians, Jews and their allies in the Middle East.

"According to Osama bin Laden's thinking, there are no dormant cells," Abu Jandal, one of bin Laden's former bodyguards in Afghanistan, said in a recently published interview in the Arabic-language newspaper Al-Quds Al-Arabi. "Every element of al Qaeda is self-activated. Whoever finds a chance to attack just goes ahead. The decision is theirs. This is regardless of whether they pledged allegiance to Sheik Osama bin Laden or not."

During the last year, the thinking of bin Laden and other key fugitive leaders — as communicated in taped addresses and on password-protected Internet message boards — has been influenced by the course of the war in Iraq. Last November, Zarqawi pledged allegiance to bin Laden, and by doing so created at least the appearance of a unified al Qaeda approach to the war, with Zarqawi operating as the frontline commander and bin Laden as his spiritual and political mentor.

Indeed, Zarqawi's pledge to bin Laden has offered a model of the new kind of al Qaeda outsourcing. "From al Qaeda's point of view, it makes it look like they're in on the biggest action going right now in Iraq," said the former U.S.

intelligence official, speaking on condition of anonymity. "From Zarqawi's point of view, it's brand recognition — you're a franchisee, whether Burger King or al Qaeda."

Both bin Laden and Zarqawi have emphasized two prominent themes in their approach to the Iraq war: driving a wedge between the United States and its allies, and bleeding American and allied economies. Both goals may be reflected in yesterday's London attacks.

Bin Laden and some of his lieutenants have strongly emphasized economic issues related to Iraq in recent postings and speeches. Bin Laden believes that he and his followers helped destroy the Soviet Union by tying its 40th Army down in a long, costly war in Afghanistan during the 1980s. These days bin Laden says again and again that he intends to do the same to the United States and its allies in Iraq. In his videotaped speech to the American people last November, on the eve of the U.S. election, he boasted of "the success of the bleed-until-bankruptcy plan."

Some terrorism analysts said bin Laden's role as inspiration — if not direct commander — of the British operation appears clear.

"It doesn't matter whether it's al Qaeda-directed or al Qaeda-inspired. The long-term effect on the jihadist movement is likely to be the same from the attacks: a source of recruitment, inspiration and motivation," said Roger Cressey, a former senior counterterrorism official in the Clinton and Bush administrations.

"I do not really believe there is such a thing as al Qaeda, the organization; there is al Qaeda, the mindset," said Yosri Fouda, senior investigative reporter in London for the al-Jazeera satellite television network, the only journalist known to have interviewed Sept. 11 planners Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and Ramzi Binalshibh. "This is what I find much scarier. Your ability to predict is reduced to a minimal level."

Terrorism specialists said the current threat in Europe was from a new generation of recruits who might be much less connected to the core of al Qaeda.

"The cells that are forming are getting younger, and they're forming over the Internet," in a significant change from the profile of the jihadist recruit prior to Sept. 11, when al Qaeda often relied on more mature veterans of its Afghan training facilities, Sageman said in a telephone interview yesterday. Bruce Hoffman, a terrorism expert at the Rand Corp., a research institution, said the State Department asserts that as many as 4,000 terrorism suspects have been arrested worldwide since Sept. 11, 2001. "But they are being replaced as fast as we can kill or capture them," he said. "Al Qaeda has this capacity to sustain itself. Even if they are reduced as an organization, they've been able to enlist any number of others to do their bidding."

The tactics and targeting in the London bombings may also suggest what Rand Beers, a former White House counterterrorism official and adviser to last year's Democratic presidential campaign, calls the "devolution" of al Qaeda. "We've seen a willingness to engage in smaller, less iconic kinds of targets," said Beers, noting that attacks like those in Madrid and London were technically unsophisticated and inexpensive to mount, yet they caused devastation and panic in just minutes.

It isn't clear whether the London attacks involved suicide bombers or timed explosives left in place, but either way, operations of this kind do not require advance training or long periods of time to execute, according to bomb-making specialists.

"We didn't see anyone try to fly into Buckingham Palace or take down the [British Telecom] tower," said Daniel Benjamin, a former White House counterterrorism official who is now a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. "It doesn't show that kind of need to top oneself that al Qaeda has shown in the past" when bin Laden and other key leaders had more time and space to plan their operations.

Even the relatively unsophisticated nature of the attacks in London has generated soul-searching about whether effective countermeasures exist against an Islamic extremist movement that appears able to "self-generate" new terrorists, as a former senior U.S. counterterrorism official put it. "The impact of it is significant. It shows they have been able to overcome a well-developed security architecture in London," the former official said. "It shows that al Qaeda and associated groups and fellow travelers still have the ability to conduct an effective operation."

Selma Belaala, chercheuse au CERI

- Le Monde / by Xavier Ternisien
- VDAmok

Jul 8 2005 - Jul 9. **Vous avez mené une enquête dans les milieux islamistes à Londres, en juin. Vous avez constaté le démantèlement du "Londonistan", la nébuleuse islamiste de Londres basée dans la mosquée de Finsbury Park. Que s'est-il passé ?**

En février, des négociations âpres et violentes ont eu lieu entre les islamistes "centristes" et les partisans d'Abou Hamza et d'Abou Qutada [les deux prédicateurs djihadistes], qui occupaient toujours la fameuse mosquée de Finsbury Park, au nord de Londres. Les centristes ont demandé aux djihadistes de quitter la place. C'est un groupe d'islamistes

opposés au salafisme takfiriste [qui prône l'excommunication des autres musulmans] et au terrorisme qui a conduit les négociations, dans lesquels un ancien porte-parole des Frères musulmans à Londres a joué un rôle central.

Mais le démantèlement du Londonistan avait commencé bien avant, avec l'appui du gouvernement Blair ?

Il débute en 2002, par quelques arrestations, dont celle d'Abou Qutada. Mais on a l'impression, à cette époque, qu'il s'agit d'une politique ponctuelle. Le démantèlement du "Londonistan" a pris du temps. Abou Hamza est arrêté en mai 2004. Il était le responsable de la communication, tandis qu'Abou Qutada était l'idéologue du salafisme takfiriste en Europe. Le coup le plus spectaculaire a été la reprise en main de la mosquée de Finsbury, en février. Celle-ci a même été fermée pendant quelques semaines, entre mars et avril.

Comment expliquez-vous le changement de politique du gouvernement britannique ?

Il a été mis en oeuvre à des fins de politique intérieure. Pour faire accepter sa loi antiterroriste, adoptée en mars, Tony Blair avait besoin de montrer qu'il y avait des activistes dangereux. Le 6 mars, il a avancé le chiffre de 200 activistes islamistes présents sur le sol britannique. Les services de sécurité ont fourni des estimations plus modestes, de l'ordre de 40 à 50 activistes.

Tony Blair a-t-il évolué sous la pression des Américains ?

Je ne le pense pas. Il y a, certes, un alignement sur la politique étrangère américaine. Mais Tony Blair a joué la carte de la loi antiterroriste dans un contexte de politique intérieure, pour répondre à une demande de l'électorat.

Quels étaient les liens de Finsbury Park avec Al-Qaida ?

D'un point de vue historique, ils ne sont pas évidents. Parce que ni Abou Hamza, ni Abou Qutada ne sont passés par l'Afghanistan. En ce sens, ils ne font pas partie de l'élite, de l'aristocratie activiste à l'origine du salafisme djihadiste. Ils apparaissent bien plus tard, à Londres. Ils récupèrent le label djihadiste et ils l'utilisent. C'est à ce moment-là que se situe une rencontre avec la pensée d'Al-Qaida.

Le démantèlement du Londonistan est-il à l'origine des attentats ?

Non. Mais cet événement marque la chute d'une organisation, d'un réseau actif et très puissant, capable de donner des informations et, au besoin, de négocier avec les pouvoirs publics. La concentration des salafistes djihadistes à Finsbury permettait de contrôler qui venait et pourquoi, quelle était la teneur du discours et la nature des cibles désignées dans les prêches. Finsbury était un sanctuaire. Sa fermeture a provoqué un éclatement du leadership salafiste takfiriste en Europe.

Quand Finsbury est fermée, en mars, on ne sait plus qui fait quoi. Il y a un flottement. Subitement, cette mouvance ultra-radical est devenue invisible. Le démantèlement du Londonistan marque un tournant. Désormais, les Britanniques cumulent deux handicaps aux yeux des islamistes radicaux : une politique étrangère alignée sur les Etats-Unis au Moyen-Orient et la répression des salafistes djihadistes takfiristes.

Peut-il exister un système de "vases communicants" entre le groupe de Finsbury et les auteurs des attentats ?

Nous sommes dans une phase de dissidence entre les salafistes djihadistes qui oeuvraient dans un cadre territorial très précis, et ceux qui ont envie d'étendre le djihad. Les groupes les plus radicaux ne perçoivent plus le djihad en termes de libération de territoires musulmans occupés, mais comme une action armée contre les "régimes impies", musulmans et occidentaux.

Quelle va être la réaction des autres islamistes londoniens ?

La catastrophe qui vient de se produire était attendue et redoutée par les islamistes centristes. Après les attentats, leur position se trouve fragilisée. C'est le cas pour les islamo-nationalistes en exil à Londres, comme les représentants du Front islamique du salut (FIS), les Frères musulmans égyptiens et syriens...

Le démantèlement du Londonistan a-t-il été une erreur ?

C'est une erreur d'avoir procédé de cette manière après avoir accueilli et pratiquement donné les moyens, pendant dix ans, aux franges les plus extrêmes du salafisme djihadiste de construire tout un appareil. C'est une erreur de l'avoir fait à un moment où la politique étrangère britannique est fortement contestée dans le monde musulman.

London Bombing Teil III

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Net industry urged to co-operate after London bombings

- The Register / by Tim Richardson
- Bits of Freedom

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 11. ISPA - the UK's internet trade body - has called on ISPs to co-operate with police and other law enforcement agencies following last Thursday's terrorist bombings in London.

In a memo circulated to ISPs last Thursday the National High Tech Crime Unit (NHTCU) called on ISPs to "preserve" where "reasonably practicable" communications data and content from electronic communications so that it can be used if necessary as part of the investigation into last week's murderous events.

The data requested to be preserved includes content of email servers and email server logs; pager, SMS and MMS messages and call data records including content of voicemail platforms.

Investigators believe that those behind the bombing will have most likely used the net and mobile phones to help plan the bombings. They want to ensure that any information currently stored by service providers will not be lost over the coming months and that it can be made available as part of their ongoing investigation. The data preservation request issued last Thursday is similar to one made in 2001 following the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the US.

Even before the NHTCU wrote to service providers asking for their co-operation ISPA had already contacted the Home Office offering its help.

A spokesman for ISPA told us: "ISPA and its members are committed to undertaking practical measures to assist law enforcement agencies to prevent terrorism. "We ask that all UK ISPs provide what practical assistance they can to UK law enforcement agencies at this time."

The secret war on terror

- Times / by Michael Smith
- Cees Wiebes

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 10. The MI5 surveillance team picks up its suspect as he leaves his parents' house in an Asian-dominated area of one of Britain's major cities. The watchers keep their distance unobtrusively as the target — we will call him Jamal — stops to speak to another young Asian.

The body language makes it clear that Jamal is in charge. The conversation is not aggressive, but nor are they merely chatting. It is clearly not a chance encounter, and it is taking place on a well chosen patch of waste ground where they cannot be overheard. The MI5 team holds off.

Jamal has no record of extremism. He has never been seen publicly to side with the angry young men who after Friday prayers rage against Britain's involvement in the war in Iraq.

Jamal's family has been here for several generations. He is regarded by those who know him as fully assimilated into British society. He has what his mother rightly regards as "a respectable job" working in computers.

On the face of it his frequent trips to Pakistan are innocent visits to see his aunts and uncles. But intelligence obtained by MI6 from a "liaison service", in this case the CIA, shows that Jamal spends most of his "holidays" in Pakistan in guesthouses in the tribal homelands, talking to known members of Al-Qaeda.

Jamal does not exist, but his profile and the way the intelligence services deal with him exemplify the war on terror.

Britain's security and intelligence services have had to revamp their operations completely in the four years since the September 11 attacks to keep track of home-grown terrorists like Jamal.

Surveillance is not confined simply to "watching". His mobile phone is bugged, his conversations are recorded and analysed, his movements are filmed and his contacts are subjected to the same deep surveillance.

MI5 knows that simply dragging Jamal off the streets is not a solution; someone else will take his place.

Jamal has been under surveillance ever since the MI6/CIA report arrived in the Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC), based in MI5's Millbank offices.

Set up in May 2003, JTAC contains experts from every UK security and intelligence-gathering agency and is entirely focused on international terrorism.

Commanded by a member of the Defence Intelligence Staff and controlled by MI5's director, Dame Eliza Manningham-Buller, it is a key part of Britain's war against terror.

Changes designed to make the security service less hierarchal ensure that all the specialists, including the "visual surveillance" experts and the technical experts, are working together. Their work takes up around half the service's annual budget, which has rocketed in recent years.

In Jamal's case, the watchers have taken over a house close to his home, videoing everything. Conversations inside his home can be recorded by bouncing radio waves off the window panes.

These intrusive intelligence methods have been justified legally on the suspicion that Jamal is building up what is effectively a franchise for Al-Qaeda.

All such surveillance teams have an MI5 lawyer attached to the operation, overseeing everything they do to ensure that any evidence they collect will be admissible in court should they arrest their target.

Nobody is yet sure what role Jamal has been groomed for by Al-Qaeda. During his time in the Pakistani guesthouse he may have been trained as a bomb-maker. Certainly he has been taught leadership and recruitment skills, how to persuade other young Muslims that it is their duty to force the "new crusaders" out of Iraq and Afghanistan.

The MI5 team knows that, using a pseudonym, he has set up his own weblog with links to radical websites that accuse Israel of being behind the 9/11 attacks. Visitors to the site are encouraged to post their own views. Jamal picks out those that seem most susceptible to recruitment, pliable young men who want to know more.

These recruits are steered away from the weblog to private one-to-one e-mail conversations in which they are groomed for roles within a group that Jamal initially portrays as innocuous.

Slowly and carefully Jamal will ease them into joining his terrorist group, not a part of Al-Qaeda but nevertheless one that regards Osama Bin Laden as its guiding light.

The warrants the MI5 watchers have obtained permit them to intercept Jamal's e-mail conversations with those he is grooming, and to carry out "portscans" on his computer. Using sophisticated software, they reach into it to search for incriminating files.

His mobile telephone is being monitored by specialists from the British signals intelligence agency, GCHQ, whose experts carry out "traffic analysis" of all the calls to and from his phone, building up a picture of his contacts and, where appropriate, seeking fresh warrants to monitor their telephones.

GCHQ specialists don't even need Jamal to be using his phone. As long as his mobile is switched on and he has it with him, it can be used to listen in to anything he is saying to anyone else.

Mobile telephone networks operate in a cellular structure with each cell of around 100 square miles controlled by a base station that keeps the phone linked to the central network. As its owner moves between the cells, the phone continuously links into the nearest base station, using a completely separate frequency to the one on which conversations take place, so that the network knows where to direct any incoming calls.

This "control frequency" can be used to take over the mobile phone and turn it into a bug. That's the theory. But today Jamal's telephone is in his pocket and its microphone cannot pick up what he is saying as he stands on the waste ground near his parents' house.

This does not concern the surveillance team unduly, because the young man Jamal is talking to – we will call him Naz – is an undercover operator who has infiltrated Jamal's terror network.

Naz, who is on loan from MI6, turned up on Jamal's weblog not long after that first report from the CIA came in. One of a small but increasing number of young Asians using their understanding of their own culture and communities, Naz is helping to ensure that the JTAC teams can keep a watch on people like Jamal and stop terror attacks.

The lesson of last week's outrages in London is grim, however. All the sophisticated surveillance of terror suspects had produced no hint of preparation for the bombings. MI5 knows that the likes of Jamal could never plant a bomb; it is the ones MI5 does not know about who are the real danger.

With No Leads, British Consult Allies on Blasts

- New York Times / by Elaine Sciolino and Don Van Natta Jr / Souad Mekhennet contributed
- Cees Wiebes

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 10. British intelligence officials, frustrated by their failure to quickly crack the worst terrorist attack here since World War II, have sought help from counterparts in the United States and two dozen European allies to develop possible leads, European counterterrorism officials said Sunday.

The contacts included an extraordinary, private meeting in London on Saturday, convened by Scotland Yard and MI5, Britain's domestic intelligence agency, that brought together senior law enforcement and intelligence officials from the United States and the two dozen European countries, three participants and several others with knowledge of the session said.

European participants said they were struck by how little was known about the attacks, which hit three trains in the London Underground and a double-decker bus on Thursday.

The investigation into the coordinated bombings, which left at least 49 people dead and more than 700 wounded, is now the largest criminal inquiry in British history.

The call for help was unusual coming from Britain, which is regarded by other European countries as often having access to more and better quality intelligence because it is part of a long-established, Anglophone intelligence-sharing agreement with the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

But the two-hour session also indicated that the British officials running the complex inquiry were frustrated because they had few breaks, few leads and no suspects in the 48 hours after the attack, the most important investigative period after a terrorist bombing.

The participants said it was a kind of counterterrorism investigators' summit meeting that is almost never seen in Europe, especially just 48 hours after a terrorist attack in one country. They spoke on condition that they not be identified by name or country because of the delicacy of the investigation.

Top officials exchanged information, intelligence and expertise in an attempt to help Britain find the bombers, the participants said.

The meeting was also considered extraordinary because European countries do not often work together on complex terrorism investigations. Cooperation is complicated by differences in each country's intelligence agencies and counterterrorism police, and often-sharp differences among crime-fighting and judicial approaches. Tracking terrorism suspects also is difficult because they move freely across Europe's open borders, and finger-pointing among countries has followed terrorist strikes.

But the London meeting was a sign that most countries in Europe believe that solving the London bombings and thwarting the next attack are responsibilities shared by everyone.

"We're all under the threat of attack, and we all must work together to stop the next one," said a Europe-based senior intelligence official, whose deputy attended the meeting. "The next attack could happen outside my window."

British investigators and senior government officials, including British Home Secretary Charles Clarke, said this weekend that they were very concerned that the cell of terrorists responsible for the attacks might strike again in London. Concern also is increasing among a number of intelligence and law enforcement officials that the longer there is no progress in the inquiry, the greater the chance that another attack will occur in another European country. "A copycat attack is a big worry," one senior investigator said.

A number of European countries, including France, Belgium, Britain and Germany, are now dealing with a new wave of participants in the insurgency in Iraq, in addition to the older wave of veterans who fought in Afghanistan. Some of these young recruits return to their home countries as heroes and recruit young men to participate in attacks at home.

"Sad to say, we have known the effects of terrorism longer than others in Europe," said a senior French law enforcement official with responsibility for terrorist investigations. "London was particularly shocking because it's so close to us. We are not at all sure this is the end."

On the same day as the London attacks, the French interior minister, Nicolas Sarkozy, said that although France did not receive a specific terrorist threat, the country still felt threatened. "A certain number of cells have been arrested lately that leads us to think that France like the other countries - no more but no less - could be threatened," Mr. Sarkozy said in an interview with France 2 television.

Investigators have still not determined whether the cell of bombers was a homegrown group of Britons who had planned the attacks in Britain, or a group of foreigners who entered Britain to carry out the attacks. Investigators have also not ruled out the possibility that the bombers were dispatched from Iraq.

British officials have been working on a separate track with Spanish explosives specialists and law enforcement and intelligence officials to determine the extent of similarities to the bombings of four commuter trains in Madrid on March 11, 2004, that killed 191 people.

After the Madrid attacks, Britain and Spain began several joint investigative initiatives - with spies on the ground, simulated exercises and intelligence-sharing, said former and current Spanish and British intelligence officials.

Spanish and British officials plan to convene another meeting on Monday to share intelligence and tactical information. "There's nothing concrete, but we're sharing hypotheses and procedures we learned from March 11," said one participant in the meeting on Saturday. "We're even looking for what hypotheses we may not yet have thought of."

Britain and its allies are working from the hypothesis that the explosives were detonated with electrical timers, investigators said. The bombs were probably not detonated with telephone calls because the depth of the Underground makes cellphone reception almost impossible. One leader of a European domestic intelligence service who attended the meeting said that the timers might have been similar to those used by demolition crews at construction sites.

While the London and Madrid bombers hit commuter trains in morning rush hour with bombs that exploded nearly simultaneously, there is one big difference: Spanish investigators got breaks that their London counterparts have not had.

Within hours of the Madrid attacks, the police discovered a van apparently used by the bombers with detonators and cassette tape recordings of the Koran. Hours later, Madrid police officers at the bombed Atocha station discovered a cellphone ringing in a sports duffel bag, attached to an unexploded bomb. The phone's alarm function, the detonating mechanism, had failed.

Through the cellphone and its chip, investigators made the first arrests only two days after the bombings. In addition, a copper-wire detonator found on the unexploded bomb matched seven copper-wire detonators found in the van.

In an interview at the time, Ignacio Astarloa, then the secretary of state for security in Spain's Interior Ministry, said the discovery of the sports bag was "a blessing." "It is the only bag planted by the terrorists that allows us to investigate something that isn't just ashes," he said.

The meeting on Saturday included considerable discussion of the frustrations in the inquiry. "They briefed us first on what they know and don't know," said a participant, the leader of a European domestic intelligence service. "We were asked to help them answer every question they have. The clear message was that there are a lot of hypotheses, some ideas, for the moment no actual concrete piece of evidence, no formal element to guide you."

For that reason, he said, "Every country is looking at every element that could have a link with Great Britain." There has been considerable discussion in European capitals and among intelligence and law enforcement services of the possible ethnic origin of the bombers.

Two participants in the meeting on Saturday said the bombers might have been North African Arabs, particularly Moroccans, as was the case in Madrid. But there was also speculation that the bombers could have tried to make the attacks resemble the Madrid bombings to throw off the investigation. "Every police and analytical service is taking that into consideration," one participant said.

Another theory held that an isolated cell with no foreign involvement but external inspiration may have been responsible. A group of Pakistanis arrested in Britain last year on suspicion of planning a terrorist act seemed to be autonomous, for example, which is a worrying trend, a participant in the meeting said.

That participant also said European services were scrutinizing the Iraqi connection to any possible culprits - who could be veterans of the insurgency who have returned to a number of European countries.

Emergency summit to discuss gaps in phone intelligence

- The Times / by Richard Ford and Rosemary Bennett
- Intelligence Digest / by Glenmore Trenear-Harvey

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 11. Charles Clarke will urge EU countries to store millions of personal mobile phone and e-mail records and share them with police and intelligence services when he attends an emergency summit in Brussels later this week.

The Home Secretary will propose on Wednesday that telecommunications data should be held for between twelve months and three years as part of a package of measures to combat terrorist attacks. Mr Clarke will tell fellow EU interior ministers that action rather than talk is now needed. The Home Secretary said: "Telecommunications records, whether of telephones or of e-mails, which record what calls were made from what number to another number at what time, are of very important use for intelligence. "I am not talking about the content of any call but the fact that a call was made," he added.

A joint proposal by Britain, France, Ireland and Sweden is recommending that telecommunications records are stored for a minimum of twelve months and a maximum of three years.

At the moment there is a voluntary agreement in Britain for all data to be held for between six months and a year. In the Irish Republic information is kept for three years but in Germany and Denmark there is no obligation for telecommunications firms to retain any information.

The British proposal would require an estimated annual investment of €180 million (£124 million) by telecommunications firms.

It would allow the police and intelligence agencies access to "traffic" data - details about who has called or messaged whom with times and locations - and make it possible for security agencies to track individuals across the EU.

Mr Clarke, who called the emergency summit in Brussels following the terrorist attacks in London, will also urge all EU states to share more information with Europol and Interpol. He will press for the tracking of lost or stolen explosives within the EU in an attempt to prevent terrorists obtaining raw material for bombs.

The Prime Minister will dismiss opposition calls today for an inquiry into the terrorist attacks and give his full backing to the work of the intelligence services and the police, when he makes a statement to MPs on the London bombings.

He will say that the focus of the security services should remain on catching the perpetrators of the four bomb attacks. Their efforts should not be disrupted by an inquiry into what may have gone wrong, he will say.

Mr Blair will brush aside demands from Michael Howard, the Conservative leader, for an inquiry to establish whether something had gone wrong.

The Prime Minister will also use his Commons statement to say that the "root causes" of the attacks have to be addressed.

He will make clear that he expects Muslim leaders to confront extremists in their communities who "distort" their faith, and defeat them.

Yesterday the Tory leader repeated his demands for a special police force to take charge of Britain's borders, and for a US-style Minister for Homeland Security to be appointed.

The Tory leader said that it was too early to say whether the Government had made mistakes in its handling of the attacks. "The inquiry we have asked for is an inquiry into what happened, what went wrong," Mr Howard told the BBC's News 24.

"Clearly in an ideal world we would have been able to prevent this dreadful attack and we weren't able to do that. It is not to say that was anybody's fault. We cannot achieve a guarantee of total immunity from these attacks in today's world.

"But it is sensible to have an inquiry with the benefit of hindsight into what was done and what wasn't done to see if there are lessons which can be learnt. Perhaps there are, perhaps there aren't."

MPs said that they would be seeking assurances from Mr Blair that the Government would not "steamroller" legislation through the Commons to toughen up the anti-terrorism laws in the wake of the attacks.

One former minister said that MPs had been put under pressure before to back security measures. "There is some concern that we will be presented with new proposals to lock up suspects and have our arms twisted even more than before," the MP said.

But Home Office officials said last night that a new planned anti-terror Bill would not be speeded up and would come to the Commons in the autumn as arranged.

The Bill will include a new offence of an "act preparatory to terrorism", which would be designed to help to convict those on the fringes of terrorist activity, including those providing financial and other kinds of logistical support.

Understanding the July 7 London Bombings

- Power and Interest News Report / by Erich Marquardt, Yevgeny Bendersky, Federico Bordonaro

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 11. On July 7, terror attacks struck the West again, with the latest salvo occurring in downtown London. The unidentified attackers targeted London's transportation system, successfully exploding four bombs within an hour time frame. Three of the bombs struck three underground trains, while the last bomb destroyed one of London's trademark double decker busses in the Russell Square area; the first blast occurred at 8:51 AM, while the last blast detonated at 9:47 AM. The attacks left some 50 dead and hundreds injured in what is considered to be the worst attack on British soil since World War II.

Islamic Extremism Strikes Again

British and international authorities believe al-Qaeda, or a group influenced by al-Qaeda, is behind the bombings. The attacks appeared to be perfectly timed with the opening of the G8 Summit of the world's leading industrial countries, which took place in Gleneagles, Scotland. The world's most influential leaders were present at the summit at the time of the attacks, including U.S. President George W. Bush. The target and timing of the strikes is significant, since it brought the most media attention possible to the bombings.

Furthermore, the attacks were very similar to the March 2004 terror attacks on Spain's transportation system which resulted in 191 deaths. In that incident, four commuter trains in Madrid were targeted in similar fashion. The Madrid attacks involved knapsack-contained bombs left on trains, equipped with cell phone triggered detonators. While it is not yet clear the exact nature of the explosives used in London, the international media has reported that British authorities recovered detonators and did not find any traces of the attacks being the result of suicide bombers.

Shortly after the London incident, a group calling itself the Secret Organization of al-Qaeda in Europe claimed responsibility for the bombings by releasing a statement on the Internet. The statement read: "the heroic mujahideen have carried out a blessed raid in London, Britain is now burning with fear, terror and panic in its northern, southern, eastern and western quarters." The statement also warned that Italy and Denmark, two states that support the United States in its ongoing intervention in Iraq, will suffer next.

It is far from clear whether this organization had any role in the bombings since often times after terror incidents there are diverging claims of responsibility by different organizations in the hopes of garnering media attention for themselves. The claim of responsibility by a relatively unknown group also highlights how difficult it is for authorities to find the perpetrators of attacks related to the Islamic revolutionary movement now that Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda network has been attacked and scattered as a result of the U.S. intervention of Afghanistan. [See: "The Threat of Al-Qaeda and the Islamic Revolutionary Movement"]

More Terrorism to Follow

London and Madrid style attacks can be expected to continue as long as countries in the West influence political affairs in Muslim-majority countries. Western influence in the Middle East led to al-Qaeda's targeting of the United States and Western interests, and so long as this relationship continues, attacks by both sides are inevitable.

The United States and its allies clearly have the upper hand when it comes to the level of accessible power available. The ongoing U.S.-led campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, in addition to U.S. military or political involvement in other Muslim-majority countries such as Yemen and Saudi Arabia, have been easy for the United States to initiate. That being said, the interventions have not been costless for the United States; Washington has suffered politically, economically and militarily due to the ongoing insurgency in Iraq.

The Islamic revolutionary movement, on the other hand, has less power at its disposal. The infrequency of its attacks demonstrates its inability to wage a constant campaign against the United States and its allies. While it is possible the attacks will increase in frequency, this has not yet occurred since the present day struggle began.

Instead, attacks are launched periodically with the hopes of using fear to damage the interests of the United States and its allies. As argued by bin Laden in the past, "Terror is the most dreaded weapon in the modern age. It can add fear and helplessness to the psyche of the people of Europe and the United States. . . You can understand as to what will be the performance of the nation in a war, which suffers from fear and helplessness."

Furthermore, while the United States and its allies must generally restrict its targets to the military and political spheres, the Islamic revolutionary movement has the advantage of being able to target any industry, including those that have the best ability to influence public opinion. As al-Qaeda articulated in late 2002, "The enemy's tourist industry includes easy targets with major economic, political, and security importance. This is because the impact of an attack on a tourist facility that cannot be protected equals, and sometimes surpasses, the impact of an attack against an enemy warship."

The attacks in Madrid and London were clear demonstrations of this, and an attack in other relevant countries — Italy, Denmark, Poland — can be expected to mimic this style. Such attacks can also influence political decisions in the affected country. After the Madrid bombings, for instance, the incumbent government lost the subsequent elections partially as a result of fallout from the attacks.

Yet, when measuring the psychological effects of the July 7 bombings on British society, one is forced to notice how the first days after the attacks signal a different dynamic at work when compared to the incidents in Madrid. London's political situation is different from the Spanish one. In Spain, the bombings were immediately followed by national elections. The then ruling party, José Maria Aznar's conservative Partido Popular, stood as a strong supporter of the U.S.-led intervention in Iraq.

Its opposition, formed around José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero's Socialist Party, had in contrast promised a quick withdrawal from the Iraqi theater of operations. The catastrophic attacks in Madrid and Aznar's awkward attempt to use the tragedy as a tool to increase repression against Basque separatists led to Zapatero's victory and to the promised withdrawal.

On the contrary, British citizens of today just recently made their political decision to reconfirm Tony Blair as prime minister. Therefore, unlike the Spanish operation, last week's terrorist attacks do not appear aimed at "regime change," but rather at sending a strong political message to the world. That message is that U.S. moves in Afghanistan and Iraq have not seriously hampered al-Qaeda nor improved security for the United States and its allies.

Attacks Reverberate Through Europe

The London blasts are having a deep impact on other European societies. Italy, Denmark and Poland believe they are the next targets since they support ongoing U.S. military operations in the Muslim world. Additionally, of the countries present at the G8 summit, a majority have experienced similar attacks on their soil propagated or sponsored by Muslim forces or organizations. London's attack is a clear message to the G8, highlighting these states' vulnerability to similar strikes, as the visiting powers have extensive involvement in Muslim-majority countries, whether or not they openly support U.S. policies in Iraq, Afghanistan or the Middle East in general.

While the party allegedly responsible for the July 7 bombings singled out Italy and Denmark as the next possible targets, the actual list could be much longer and may include the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. All three states have Muslim populations that harbor strong sympathies with al-Qaeda. In all three states, local Muslim populations have not been able to successfully assimilate, thus potentially mitigating societal tensions, with the German, Dutch and Belgian governments being partly responsible for this result. This, in turn, translates into misunderstanding and resentment between some Muslims and local populations that may lead to an agreeable environment for certain al-Qaeda or al-Qaeda affiliated organizations to orchestrate similar bombings in more European capitals.

Conclusion

The July 7 bombings in London have brought the war on terrorism back to the doorstep of Western capitals. The attacks demonstrate that while terror attacks on Western interests do not occur on a frequent basis, al-Qaeda and those organizations influenced by its ideology are continuing to plan and execute military operations. The ability to strike at the heart of a major European capital – whether in London or Madrid – demonstrates that any city in any country is at risk. It is only a matter of time before other Western cities, including cities in the United States, suffer from new terror attacks. Furthermore, the attacks will not be limited to the country's transportation system, but could take place in a historic shopping district, filled with pedestrians; the goal of most terror attacks is to create a feeling of insecurity, and any location that fulfills these objectives can become a target.

No link to Zarqawi

- Prof Juan Cole / University of Michigan

Jul 11 2005 - "If the communique issued by Qaeda al-Jihad in Europe is authentic, then this attack cannot be linked to Zarqawi. They say they are taking revenge for British troops' "massacres" of Muslims in Afghanistan and Iraq. But Zarqawi's Salafi group would never celebrate "Arabism" or speak of "heroes" (abtal) when referring to the "holy warriors" or mujahidin. Urubah and batal, Arabism and hero, are typical of the vocabulary of secular Arab nationalism— in, say, the tradition of Gamal Abdel Nasser. That message is coming from a group of terrorists that is much more comfortable with this language than are typically the extremist Salafis like Zarqawi. "Hero" would seem a term of humanistic pride to them, and Arabism would seem narrow and idolatrous as a competitor with Islam. There are Muslim thinkers who meld political Islam and Arabism— this is common in Egypt, e.g. But they belong to a different religious and intellectual tradition than Zarqawi.

Bosnia: The Birthplace of Al-Qaeda

- Serbianna / by Stella Jatrass

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 11. A series of bombs devastated London; the number of casualties numbered more than 40, 13 of whom died in a bus attack. An al-Qaeda group is linked to the London blasts: AP reports, "A group calling itself 'Secret Organization - al-Qaeda in Europe' has posted a claim of responsibility for the series of blasts in London according to a report in Der Spiegel."

Evan F. Kohlmann, author of Al-Qaeda's Jihad in Europe: The Afghan-Bosnian Network, argues that the "key to understanding Al Qaida's European cells lies in the Bosnian war of the 1990s. Using the Bosnian war as their cover, Afghan-trained Islamic militants loyal to Osama bin Laden convened in the Balkans in 1992 to establish a European domestic terrorist infrastructure in order to plot their violent strikes against the United States. As the West and the United Nations looked on with disapproval, the fanatic foreign 'mujahideen', or holy warriors, wreaked havoc across southern Europe, taking particular aim at UN peacekeepers and even openly fighting with Bosnian Muslims at times. Middle Eastern religious and charitable organizations, largely based in and funded from the Arabian Gulf, were responsible for bankrolling this effort, and providing travel documentation for would-be mujahideen recruits." Kohlmann adds that "many of the cell members - responsible for some of the most notorious terrorist attacks of the past decade - spent their formative years waging jihad in the unlikely Muslim land of Bosnia."

Therefore, it is safe to say that the birth of al-Qaeda as a force on the world stage can be traced directly back to 1992, when the Bosnian Muslim government of Alija Izetbegovic issued a passport in the Vienna embassy to Osama bin Laden. The Wall Street Journal reported in 2001 that "for the past 10 years, the most senior leaders of al Qaeda have visited the Balkans, including bin Laden himself on three occasions between 1994 and 1996. The Egyptian surgeon turned terrorist leader Ayman Al-Zawahiri has operated terrorist training camps, weapons of mass destruction factories and money-laundering and drug-trading networks throughout Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Turkey and Bosnia. This has gone on for a decade. Many recruits to the Balkan wars came originally from Chechnya, a jihad in which Al Qaeda has also played a part."

THE BOSNIA/911 CONNECTION

An AP article of 2002 entitled, "U.N. Lawyer Turns Over Hijacker Info," reported that "the chief U.N war crimes prosecutor has turned over information about one of the Sept. 11 hijackers to the United States, France and the Netherlands, the U.N. spokesman said Wednesday...The war crimes prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte, said last October that information concerning people with connections to terrorist groups, primarily in Bosnia, was provided to Pierre Prosper, the U.S. ambassador at large for war crimes.

"On Wednesday, [UN Spokesman] Eckhard confirmed for the first time that the information included material related to 'one of the named terrorists said to have been on one of the hijacked aircraft' on Sept. 11. Eckhard refused to name the hijacker but said the information was also shared with the French and Dutch governments."

The report further states that "following the terrorist attacks on the United States, Del Ponte was approached by the U.S. Embassy in The Hague, Netherlands and asked for information in identifying those responsible, Eckhard said. The office of the prosecutor did in fact have some information in relation to one of the named terrorists said to have been on one of the hijacked aircraft, he said. An electronic version of some of the information was then given to Prosper as well as French and Dutch officials, Eckhard said.

"Florence Hartmann, the spokeswoman for Del Ponte, said U.N. investigators may have had information about some Muslim fighters who stayed on in Bosnia after the civil war ended in 1995."
Moreover, Gregory R. Copley, editor of Defense & Foreign Affairs, writes: "The Islamist-dominated Government of Bosnia & Herzegovina (B-H) is proposing as its new Ambassador to the United States a woman who was one of the founders of the radical Islamist Muslim SDA Party (Party of Democratic Action [Stranka Demokratske Akcije]), which has had, since its foundation, strong links with al-Qaida and a variety of other Islamist terrorist organizations, and to the intelligence and terrorist-training arms of the Iranian Government."

In his commentary, "We bombed the wrong side?" former Canadian UNPROFOR Commander Lewis MacKenzie wrote, "The Kosovo-Albanians have played us like a Stradivarius. We have subsidized and indirectly supported their violent campaign for an ethnically pure and independent Kosovo. We have never blamed them for being the perpetrators of the violence in the early '90s and we continue to portray them as the designated victim today in spite of evidence to the contrary. When they achieve independence with the help of our tax dollars combined with those of bin Laden and al-Qaeda, just consider the message of encouragement this sends to other terrorist-supported independence movements around the world."

I repeat these words of General MacKenzie: "Just consider the message of encouragement this sends to other terrorist-supported independence movements around the world."

WE HAD HIM!

In his book, *Dereliction of Duty*, Lt. Col. Robert "Buzz" Patterson, chief military aide to President Clinton writes: "The White House Situation Room was buzzing. It was fall 1998 and the National Security Council (NSC) and the 'intelligence community' were tracking the whereabouts of Osama bin Laden, the shadowy mastermind of terrorist attacks on American targets overseas. 'They successfully triangulated his location,' yelled a 'Sit Room' watch stand. 'We've got him.' Beneath the West Wing of the White House, behind a vaulted steel door, the Sit Room staff sprang into action. The watch officer notified National Security Advisor Sandy Berger, 'Sir, we've located bin Laden. We have a two-hour window to strike'. Characteristic of the Clinton administration, the weapons of choice would be Tomahawk missiles. After several attempts to first locate President Clinton to receive permission to get Osama bin Laden, President Clinton was nowhere to be found. When the President finally accepted Berger's call, there was discussion, there were pauses — and no decision. 'We studied the issue until it was too late — the window of opportunity closed'."

On 11 March 2004, 190 people were killed at the Madrid Train Station. One of the main terrorists was born in Bosnia yet very little was made of this important connection. However, whenever or if ever information is uncovered of a possible connection of the London terrorists to Bosnia, it will be played down as was the Bosnia connection to the Madrid bombing. It wouldn't be prudent.

Madrid Mastermind hunted

- NY Daily Star / by Adam Nichols

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 10. The man believed to have masterminded last year's Madrid train bombings is emerging as the prime suspect in the devastating terror attacks on London's transit system.

Investigators are hunting Mustafa Setmariam Nasar - also known as Abu Musab al-Suri - a Syrian suspected of being Al Qaeda's operations chief in Europe, according to unidentified investigators cited in British newspapers The Sunday Times, The Sunday Telegraph and the Mail on Sunday.

Nasar, 47, allegedly played a key role in setting up an Al Qaeda structure in Spain and was indicted there in connection with the Sept. 11 attacks. Last year, the U.S. offered \$5 million for information leading to his arrest.

New evidence shows the bombs that blew apart three London Underground trains exploded within seconds of one another at 8:50 a.m. Thursday. It was previously thought the train blasts at the Aldgate St., King's Cross and Edgware Road stations were spread over 26 minutes.

"It was bang, bang, bang, very close," said London Underground chief Tim O'Toole.

The blasts were so intense that none of the 49 people confirmed dead has been identified yet.

Bodies from two of the trains are still trapped in the wreckage in tunnels more than 100 feet deep. As many as 50 additional possible victims were unaccounted for, police said yesterday. Frantic relatives were checking hospitals and posting flyers with photos of loved ones missing since Thursday's attacks.

"We don't know how many people are left in the carriages," said Deputy Chief Constable Andy Trotter of the British Transport Police. "It is extremely hot, dangerous and dusty down there."

Spanish security sources are said to have warned four months ago that Nasar had zeroed in on Britain as a likely target, The Sunday Times reported.

It cited Spanish investigators as saying Nasar - now believed to be in Iraq - had set up a sleeper cell in Britain. But Spanish authorities believed he was planning an attack to coincide with the British general election in May, rather than the G-8 summit last week, according to the paper.

It also said that, according to dossiers prepared by the British government, Al Qaeda has been stepping up efforts to recruit middle-class Muslims in British universities and colleges to carry out attacks.

A group calling itself the Secret Organization of Al Qaeda in Europe claimed responsibility shortly after the blasts. Little is known about the group, but the name was attached to an Internet statement that claimed responsibility for the Madrid train bombings that killed 191 people in March 2004.

A second group said yesterday it was behind the London bombings. The claim was made by the Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigades, a group that has no history of violent attacks but has claimed responsibility for events like the New York City blackout of 2003 - which turned out to have no connection to terror.

Fears that terrorists could strike again were still very much on officials' minds. In Birmingham, central England, police evacuated 20,000 people from the city's central entertainment district last night after intelligence indicating a "substantial threat," said Stuart Hyde, assistant chief constable of West Midlands Police.

Police carried out a controlled explosion to disarm a suspicious object found on a Birmingham bus. It was determined not to be an explosive device.

The rapid-fire explosions in London suggest timers were used to detonate the bombs, a technique that also indicates a level of sophistication that goes beyond a makeshift cell of terrorists. Police also said the 10-pound bombs were made of "high explosives," likely plastic explosives, another indication of a sophisticated terror cell at work.

A fourth bomb, which destroyed a double-decker bus and killed at least 13 people, was detonated an hour later. Officials did not speculate on why the last blast was delayed. Investigators are increasingly convinced that only one bomber - the terrorist who blew up the bus - died in the attacks, The Times of London reported yesterday.

The bombs packed such a wallop that officials have been unable to identify any of the dead and are relying on fingerprints, dental records and DNA. Experts already inured by the destruction wrought by last year's tsunami in South Asia were brought in to help recover victims.

"A large number, if not all [of members of the body recovery teams], had been in Sri Lanka or Thailand," said Detective Superintendent Jim Dickie. "They are extremely experienced."

Attackers Often Caught As Masterminds Flee

- Washington Post / by Craig Whitlock

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 10. As British police searched for the bombers who killed at least 49 people in London last week, they faced the same problem that has stymied investigations into several other major al Qaeda-style strikes around the world: finding the masterminds in the background.

A clear pattern has emerged from attacks in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East in recent years that strongly suggests an element of central planning or instruction, according to counterterrorism officials and analysts. But so far, the people at the top have managed to cover their tracks by using a sophisticated cell structure that keeps their identities secret, even from the foot soldiers and mid-level operatives in their networks.

In the aftermath of the London bombings and others in the past three years in Madrid, Casablanca, Istanbul, Mombasa, Kenya, and the Red Sea resort of Taba, Egypt, counterterrorism officials were able to determine who actually carried out the attacks and arrest most of the surviving perpetrators, usually homegrown cells of Islamic radicals who lived nearby. Authorities blamed al Qaeda for inspiring the plots in each case, but failed to find or even learn the names of the individuals who conceived and directed the attacks.

"We might be able to apprehend the hands, but not the brains behind it," said Mustafa Alani, an expert on Islamic terrorist networks and a senior adviser with the Gulf Research Center in Dubai. "This is the problem. The brain keeps working somewhere else."

The Bush administration has said that al Qaeda's old command structure has been decimated. Much of the organization's top leadership has been captured or killed since the Sept. 11, 2001, hijackings, while the rest — including founder Osama bin Laden — are in hiding or on the run. The training camps that graduated tens of thousands of Islamic radicals in Afghanistan in the 1990s have been put out of commission.

But the remaining operatives work in an amorphous network that in many ways is even more difficult to fight. Several major bombings since 2002 have reflected a pattern in which experienced operatives and bomb-makers travel around the world to give strategic and technical advice to local cells of Islamic extremists who otherwise lack the knowledge to launch sophisticated attacks. By the time the attacks take place, the advisers have long since left the country and erased their tracks, counterterrorism officials and analysts say.

"There are middlemen who are effectively giving the al Qaeda stamp and some professional help to these local groups," said Michael Clarke, director of the International Policy Institute at King's College London. "They're giving them some real expertise. They're also creating this dynamic which is very difficult for the authorities to follow."

In Madrid, Spanish police arrested more than two dozen people for playing a role in the March 11, 2004, commuter-train explosions that killed 191 people and wounded more than 1,800. Seven other suspects were killed a few weeks later after police surrounded them in a suburb of the capital. Many of those detained were Moroccan immigrants who had lived in Madrid for several years and had records for petty crime, but were not veterans of al Qaeda training camps or considered terrorist threats.

Since then, Spanish investigators have identified two al Qaeda veterans who they think may have helped orchestrate the bombings but whose exact roles remain a mystery. One of them, Amer Azizi, is a Moroccan national who provided military training at camps in Afghanistan and who is also a suspect in the May 16, 2003, suicide bombings in Casablanca, according to Spanish court records.

Another is Mustafa Setmariam Nasar, a native of Syria with Spanish citizenship who is a leading ideologue in radical Islamic circles. The U.S. Justice Department has posted a \$5 million reward for Nasar's capture, accusing him of training extremists to concoct chemical weapons.

British newspapers reported Sunday that Spanish intelligence officials had warned their counterparts in the United Kingdom four months ago that Nasar may have been planning an attack in London. Nasar lived in London in the late 1990s before moving with his family to Afghanistan in 1998. "He's one of the go-betweens who could be a connection between al Qaeda the movement and al Qaeda the organization," said a European intelligence official who spoke on condition of anonymity.

But Spanish investigators remain uncertain about how the Madrid bombings were conceived and developed. Counterterrorism officials and analysts in Madrid said there could be other figures in the plot whom they still haven't identified. "We don't really know who the intellectual author was," said Charles Powell, deputy director of the Elcano Royal Institute, a think tank in Madrid that specializes in security issues.

Turkish investigators are also still trying to figure out who orchestrated multiple explosions that hit synagogues and the British Consulate and a bank in Istanbul in November 2003. Those attacks killed 57 people and wounded more than 700, the deadliest bombings in the country's history. An al Qaeda-related group asserted responsibility and police said a cell of Turkish nationals carried out the bombings, but investigators have been unable to identify the mastermind. "It's just been a dead end," said Alani, the Dubai researcher, who has studied the case extensively.

Similarly, Moroccan officials detained more than 2,000 suspects after the May 16, 2003, attacks in Casablanca that killed 45, and quickly determined that the suicide bombers came from the slums that ring the capital. While Moroccan security officials have variously blamed al Qaeda and Abu Musab Zarqawi, a Jordanian who is a leader of foreign fighters in Iraq, they also have had difficulty pinning down how the plot was organized, and by whom.

That counterterrorism officials have been unable to figure out how the operations were put together indicates that al Qaeda has shifted its approach since the Sept. 11 hijackings in the United States, a conspiracy that investigators were able to trace in great detail from beginning to end.

Unlike the 1990s, when terrorist groups were quick to take credit for bombings and hijackings, al Qaeda and other networks of Islamic extremists have increasingly embraced a strategy of silence.

In 2001, for example, about 80 percent of terrorist attacks worldwide were committed by groups that publicly asserted responsibility, according to Raphael F. Perl, a terrorism expert with the Congressional Research Service. Last year, the figure dropped to about 30 percent, he said.

The statistics do not include shadowy groups that assert responsibility for attacks but whose existence or role cannot be verified, Perl said. Already, two organizations identifying themselves as al Qaeda splinter groups have posted Internet statements saying they were behind the London bombings last week. British authorities said they were taking the claims seriously but weren't sure whether to believe either one.

"They've become increasingly decentralized," Perl said of al Qaeda. "It's like a fungus: They send out spores all over the place. That makes it much harder for law enforcement and the intelligence community to go after them."

Who was behind the bombings? The four key theories

- Independent

HOME GROWN BOMBERS

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 11. Evidence is growing that small numbers of young Muslims in the UK are willing to adopt violence in protest against events such as the war in Iraq.

Because these people do not have any history of violence or involvement in terrorism, it is hard for intelligence agencies to investigate them.

One group of British-born Muslims is awaiting trial on terrorism charges involving a plot to build a bomb in the UK.

While MI5 has become alarmed at this new category, the skill and equipment needed to make four high-explosive bombs, and to set them off at the same time, makes it unlikely that the group responsible for Thursday's attack acted without foreign help.

THE FOREIGN CELL

The need for knowledge about how to make reliable explosive devices suggests that the bombers either had help from foreign terrorists or were themselves seasoned fighters.

Activists in al-Qa'ida, or sympathetic to Osama bin Laden, could have travelled to Britain months ago from France or Spain. Here they may have stayed in safe houses or received forged papers from al-Qa'ida supporters.

Such teams are hard to track as they are not part of a formal network. Of the eight terrorist plots the police say they have foiled since 11 September 2001, not one involved the same group. The possibility of a sleeper al-Qa'ida hit squad, sent years ago, seems remote.

THE MADRID TEAM

Similarities between the bombings of commuter trains in Madrid and the Tube and bus attacks in London raise the possibility that they are linked. As in Madrid, the bombs appear to have been in rucksacks left during the morning rush-hour.

Several suspects from the Madrid cell are still at large and some are thought to have fled to the UK. Among them is Mustafa Setmariam Nasar, 47, a Syrian who is believed to be the mastermind of the attacks in Spain. He has lived in London and has connections with Britain going back 10 years.

The Spanish security services have been providing intelligence and help to MI5 and the Metropolitan Police, but as yet no link has been established.

BRITISH AL-QA'IDA

A strong possibility is that the bombers were either headed or advised by a British-born Muslim trained at an al-Qa'ida camp in Afghanistan or Pakistan.

Back in the UK, he would have gathered other fanatics radicalised by extremist clerics and passed on the terrorist skills and organisation.

The police think about 200 extremists have travelled abroad and returned to the UK with terrorist skills.

Saajid Badat, 26, a British-born Muslim who was trained at al-Qa'ida camps, admitted plotting in 2003 to blow up an aircraft bound for America. Jailed in April 2005 for 13 years, Badat had planned to set off a shoe bomb but changed his mind and dismantled it.

Injured Moroccan on bus was 'known to police' on Continent

- Independent / By Kim Sengupta

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 11. Police and security agencies investigating the London bombings are trying to ascertain the identity of a north African man injured in one of the blasts. The man, believed to be from Morocco and in his late twenties, was wounded in the blast which destroyed the double-decker bus in Tavistock Square. Security sources said last night the man was not wanted for any crimes in Britain. He is believed to be known to police on the Continent although it is unclear if this is for political activity. Investigators are looking into the possibility that the bus bomb went off accidentally. Security sources stressed that there was nothing to suggest that it was a deliberate suicide attack. Scotland Yard Deputy Assistant Commissioner Brian Paddick said: "There is a possibility that the person with the bomb died on the bus, there's also the possibility that they just left the bag with the bomb and left." It is believed that none of the injured man's relatives or friends have been traced and he has not been able to provide information.

Thirty key al-Qa'ida-linked terror suspects are identified

- Independent / by Jason Bennetto

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 11. About 30 al-Qa'ida fighters and sympathisers have been identified by counter-terrorism officers as the most likely suspects behind the London bombings, The Independent has learnt.

The mixture of foreign and British-born suspects are being investigated as part of a massive inquiry to track down those responsible for last Thursday's attacks. The cell responsible is believed to number from four to 12 people, anti-terrorist sources have revealed.

The sources also disclosed that an initial group of about 30 key suspects has been identified from the hundreds of pieces of intelligence collected by MI5, MI6, Scotland Yard's anti terrorist branch, and the bugging centre at GCHQ (the Government Communication Headquarters) in Cheltenham. The material includes phone taps and reports from foreign agents and police forces.

Among the suspects being investigated is the terrorist believed to have organised last year's Madrid train attacks in which 191 people were killed. Spanish intelligence officers have flown to London to help the police. They were among about 100 senior police officers from forces across the world that gathered at Scotland Yard in central London over the weekend to share information.

British intelligence officers are concentrating on trying to identify an individual bomber, or one of their supporters, which they hope will lead to the rest of the terror unit. "It is from investigating individuals that you find out who they are associated with and how they operate," said a counter-terrorist source. "The unit involved could be anything from three or four to about a dozen," the source added.

Among the 30-odd key suspects being investigated by British intelligence officers is Mustafa Setmariam Nasar, a 47-year-old Syrian, who is believed to be in hiding in Iraq or on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

Nasar is considered to be a likely suspect because he has lived in London and has contacts there going back 10 years. He is known to have organised terrorist training camps in Afghanistan and is believed to be the mastermind behind the Madrid train bombings.

Another suspect is Mohammed al Gerbouzi, a Moroccan, who is wanted for questioning in connection with attacks in Casablanca and Madrid. He has been granted British citizenship, but is believed to be in hiding in London. Intelligence agencies are increasingly finding al-Qa'ida suspects are becoming familiar with how they operate and are taking counter espionage measures, such as avoiding using mobiles and telecommunications that can be bugged.

MI5 and anti-terrorist police have previously identified British-born Muslim extremists who had the training and skills to make high-explosive bombs similar to the ones detonated on the Tube and on a bus in London. At least one such individual has been arrested by the authorities.

It is too early to know whether the terrorists responsible for Thursday's atrocity are British-born Muslims or foreign al-Qa'ida fighters, according to security sources. "The modus operandi that we know so far doesn't give us an awful lot to go on. They don't tell us whether they are a homegrown radicalised unit or overseas grouping, or whether they are mixed. It is too early to make that judgement," a security source said.

Most terrorist experts believe from the initial details of the attacks that an experienced bomber with skills, probably gained from an al-Qa'ida training camp, was involved. But Lord Stevens, the former commissioner of the Metropolitan Police - then Sir John - predicted yesterday that the London bombers were "almost certainly" British. Lord Stevens, who served as commissioner for five years before retiring this year, said that the bombers were "totally aware of British life and values" and although international terrorists may have provided the expertise, it was "wishful thinking" to suspect the perpetrators came from abroad.

He said: "I'm afraid there's a sufficient number of people in this country willing to be Islamic terrorists that they don't have to be drafted in from abroad."

He continued: "[The bombers] will be apparently ordinary British citizens, young men conservatively and cleanly dressed and probably with some higher education. Highly computer literate, they will have used the internet to research explosives, chemicals and electronics.

"They are also willing to kill without mercy - and to take a long time in their planning."

He added: "We believe that up to 3,000 British-born or British-based people have passed through Osama bin Laden's training camps over the years. Plainly, not all went on to become active Islamic terrorists in the UK."

Meanwhile, the police are continuing their forensic investigation, which is concentrating on trying to recover fragments of the bomb and traces of the explosives from the four blast sites.

Detectives revealed that the three bombs on Tube trains at Aldgate, Edgware Road and King's Cross had exploded almost simultaneously at 8.50am. Technical data from London Underground showed there was a gap of about 50 seconds between the first and third explosions.

The later bomb on a No 30 bus at Tavistock Square in central London, which killed 13 people, went off nearly an hour later at 9.47am. It is unclear whether the bomber was still on the bus. It is also not yet known if it was a suicide bomber, if the device went off by accident, or whether there was a timer set an hour later than the Tube devices.

The police issued an urgent appeal yesterday to the public for any photographs, video footage or mobile phone images taken in the aftermath of the bombings. They should be e-mailed to Scotland Yard at: imagesatmet.police.uk.

* Three men were arrested yesterday morning under anti-terror laws at Heathrow airport. The three British nationals were detained after they were turned back from the United States, but police sources said they were not being linked to Thursday's bombings. The three men are expected to be released overnight.

The New Al Qaeda: Local Franchises

- Christian Science Monitor / by Peter Grier

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 11. A decade ago Al Qaeda was an entrepreneurial jihadist start-up firm. Today it may have evolved into something bigger, and less tightly controlled: a worldwide franchiser of terrorist attacks.

That may be one lesson of last week's London bombings, say some terrorism experts. The British attacks were well-organized, low-tech, and prepared in great secrecy - all hallmarks of the now-decentralized Al Qaeda network. The Madrid subway attacks of 2004 were similar. So were the bombings carried out in Casablanca, Morocco, in 2003.

Having ceded some initiative to local operations, Al Qaeda may now find it more difficult to carry out such spectacular assaults as those of Sept. 11, 2001. But it possibly has evolved into a threat that extends across the globe, capable of striking almost anywhere, at almost any time.

"Al Qaeda is no longer a hierarchical organization, but rather an enabler for myriad terrorist groups and sympathizers to fight the jihadist holy war," says Ivo Daalder, senior fellow in foreign policy studies at the Brookings Institution.

Last Thursday's bombings have yet to be definitively linked to Al Qaeda by British investigators. But in Washington, at least, some officials were openly calling them an act of jihad.

Osama bin Laden or other prominent jihadists such as Abu Musab al-Zarqawi may not have been the planners of the attacks, said the US Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff in a broadcast interview on Sunday. But "clearly we're dealing with a group that is sympathetic to Al Qaeda," Mr. Chertoff said on ABC's "This Week."

For now the US terrorism alert level for mass transit will remain at elevated levels. Both Secretary Chertoff and Frances Townsend, President Bush's homeland security adviser, said that they had no warning, through "chatter" at Islamist websites or other intelligence, that attacks were going to occur anywhere last week.

There is no guarantee that similar bombings could not occur in the US, said Ms. Townsend in a broadcast interview. The best defense, she insisted, is to confront terrorists overseas. "That's why you're in Iraq and Afghanistan, fighting them there so you don't have to fight them here," said Townsend.

But the nature of Al Qaeda today means the "fighting them in Iraq" scenario just won't work, says Daalder of Brookings. Sleeper cells and jihadist sympathizers are now spread around the world, he argues. Al Qaeda-linked attacks have occurred from Indonesia to the US. "Terrorists are everywhere, and emphatically not only in Iraq," says Daalder.

Furthermore, if it is true that Western intelligence services had no or little warning prior to the London bombings, that means their focus must be off the mark, says another analyst.

After all, given last week's meeting of G-8 heads of state in Scotland, security was presumably extra-tight. It is likely that intelligence and security officials from every nation represented at the meeting swept through the UK prior to their leaders' arrival, notes Juliette Kayyem, a terrorism expert at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. "We know that something called Al Qaeda exists, but we have no sense of its contours or context or even if it has a leader," says Ms. Kayyem.

A decade ago Al Qaeda was more knowable, a start-up company that showed evidence of an entrepreneur's strengths and weaknesses. Testimony by Al Qaeda informers in US court proceedings connected with the group's first US attack - the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center - depicted jealousy over office space, fighting over expense accounts, and overall money woes.

Today Al Qaeda's leadership has been ousted from its Afghan hideaway and remains hard-pressed by US forces, says the State Department's "Country Reports on Terrorism, 2004," which was released this spring.

The group's ability to project power has been limited. Local groups affiliated with Al Qaeda, or simply imbued with their worldview, now carry out most terror attacks against the US and its allies, says the study.

Southwest Asia's Jemaah Islamiyah is one of the best-known such groups. "An increasing percentage of jihadist attacks are more local, less sophisticated, but still lethal," says the report.

To most of the world the scenes of violence in London - and in Madrid, and other recent bomb targets - are senseless. The victims were innocent people, for the most part just on their way to work. If polls are any guide, a majority of them opposed the British participation in the US invasion of Iraq.

"The human response is to say this is senseless violence. But the whole point is it is not senseless. There are goals, and this is an attempt to communicate," says Gary LaFree, director of the University of Maryland's National Center for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism.

One of the main tenets of the jihadist ideology is that US power is based on its economy - and thus a primary goal is to damage US and other Western economic targets. Commuter mass transit is a mundane, but highly vulnerable, such target.

The jihadists may also be still attempting to splinter the US coalition in Iraq. For that reason, many in Italy, another nation where the government has pushed participation with the US while the population has largely opposed it, fear that they may be the next terror target.

Will America be the next terror target?

London attack shows Al Qaeda's strategy

- SFGate / by John Arquilla [professor of defense analysis at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey. His views do not represent official Defense Department policy.

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 10. While our hearts go out to the victims of the terrorist bombings in London, our minds inevitably turn to one question: After nearly four years, why hasn't al Qaeda returned to attack America again?

There are two possible answers. One is that terror networks have been hit so hard by our military over-seas and our defenses are so improved that they can't come back to prey upon our homeland. Another, more troubling possibility is that al Qaeda has deliberately chosen a strategy of striking elsewhere and that it will turn its sights on us when it is ready.

Both answers must be considered, but the first explanation falls apart quickly when we look at al Qaeda's actions in the past few years.

For example, in April 2003, the month after the United States invaded Iraq, al Qaeda mounted a major assault in Saudi Arabia. By August 2003, it had expanded its attacks into Iraq, where it still wages a vicious insurgency. Osama bin Laden's minions are still fighting in Afghanistan and have even gone after the Pakistani military ruler, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, coming close to assassinating him on a couple of occasions.

Beyond these major offensive moves, al Qaeda and its affiliates also have mounted substantial strikes in Spain, Tunisia, Turkey and Indonesia. Now they have attacked in Britain. And if official government statistics are to be relied upon, the number of significant terrorist attacks since Sept. 11, 2001, has skyrocketed to a total of 651 in 2004, according to the State Department. That's an all-time high, except for revised 2004 figures just put out by the National Counterterrorism Center, which puts the number at 3,192.

No, terror networks are not too crippled to continue to fight us and our allies. But perhaps they haven't come back to attack America because our defenses have become too good, sharply reducing their chances of success in any new terrorist venture.

This is not likely either. We do pay more attention now to patrolling our long, unfortified borders, and we have gotten better at protecting our vulnerable power and transportation infrastructures. Nevertheless, hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants still arrive every year.

Our local transit and long-range rail systems remain at risk. And, despite the advance warning provided by earlier terrorist attempts to shoot down planes using shoulder-mounted missiles in Mombasa and Baghdad, airliners remain vulnerable to this form of attack.

Thus, it seems that the answer to our nagging question must be that al Qaeda has made a strategic choice not to bring the war back to America — yet.

What does the logic behind such a decision look like? At the broadest level, taking the war elsewhere, as al Qaeda has, follows the concept of the indirect approach championed by the great British strategist B.H. Liddell Hart. This method consists of trying to knock away the props upon which even the strongest combatant must rely.

For example, if al Qaeda succeeded in toppling the Saudi government and replacing it with radical Islamists, they would have their finger on the oil pumps feeding the global economic pulse. Similarly, if Pakistan fell to the terrorists and their supporters, they would inherit an arsenal of nuclear weapons, upsetting the whole strategic calculus of the war.

Then there is Iraq, which seems to afford nothing but room to maneuver for al Qaeda. If U.S. troops were ever to leave, as everybody including President Bush wants them to, al Qaeda would claim credit for having driven us out. That would be a public relations bonanza for bin Laden. But if we stay, al Qaeda has a handy, easy-to-reach location for fighting Americans and sapping our will to continue the terror war.

In its March 11, 2004, attacks in Madrid, al Qaeda drove a powerful wedge between the Spanish people, who opposed the war in Iraq, and their pro-U.S. government, which fell from power after those strikes.

Now, threats have been made against Italy and Denmark, two other coalition members whose publics have opposed the war on Iraq.

It remains to be seen how the British public will respond to these latest attacks, but it seems clear that the terrorist choice of London as a target is yet another aspect of the indirect approach. For if staunch British support for the U.S. intervention in Iraq were to falter, our whole policy there might come undone.

So it seems that the invasion and occupation of Iraq, which many of us opposed beforehand, have become both our Achilles' heel and the single most important reason al Qaeda has chosen not to resume its terror campaign in America. Iraq provides our principal enemy with a place to fight us directly and a reason to mount an indirect campaign against our allies.

Some might now say that this makes our presence in Iraq worthwhile. As the president has put it, "We fight the terrorists in Iraq so that we do not have to face them at home."

Perhaps. Yet for a small fraction of what our involvement in Iraq has cost us in blood and treasure, we could have shored up our homeland defenses and made it well-nigh impossible for the terrorists to attack America again.

The rerouting of an even tinier fraction of these vast resources in support of a proactive campaign by small teams of special forces hunter networks would keep the terrorists perpetually on the run, unable even to think about coming back here or about striking elsewhere.

But we're still in Iraq, and we'll be there for years to come. Oddly, this probably means few, if any, attacks will be attempted on American territory. It also means there will be more Madrids and Londons. This should remind us that, in a war fought for all that we call civilization, feeling more assured about our own safety is hardly a sign that victory is near.

Long tradition of tolerance blamed for sheltering radicals

- The Australian / by Emma-Kate Symons

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 11. Britain has been criticised by some European security experts, who claim its "tolerance" towards Islamic radicals has created the so-called "Londonistan" shelter for terrorists.

Despite widespread European support for the British since the London bombings, Alain Marsaud, a former anti-terror judge and outspoken French parliamentarian from the ruling UMP party, said in an interview in Le Parisien newspaper that "Great Britain paid the price for its tolerance towards fundamentalists".

As a new wave of anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant sentiment rises in France, Mr Marsaud attacked Britain's welcoming of Islamic radicals from the Indian subcontinent and the arrival of an Algerian and Moroccan diaspora attracted by "the English tradition of tolerance". "The British special services have been overtaken," he said. Europe needed unification of its anti-terror legislation and a US-style department of Homeland Security to better control borders, he said.

France is home to 5million Muslims, the largest population in Europe. It has been much quicker than other European nations to crack down on fanatical Islamic militants, especially since 1995 when Algerian radicals attacked the Paris metro system, killing eight people and wounding scores.

It has the toughest anti-terror regime in Europe and French judges are given wide-ranging powers to question and detain terror suspects for long periods under a system that is sometimes referred to as a Guantanamo Bay regime in France.

Leading French anti-terror judge Jean-Louis Bruguiere, for example, has detained Willie Brigitte since he was deported from Australia in late 2003 accused of operating a terror cell in Sydney.

But French politicians and counter-terror operatives are frustrated by Britain's tardiness in extraditing Rachid Ramda, held in a British jail, and one of the accused in the 1995 Paris Metro attacks.

Criticism of Britain's so-called soft anti-terror regime continued in Le Monde in an article with the introduction: "Certain experts were not surprised by the attacks on London. For them the 'tolerance' towards Islamist groups, for a long time practised by London, has not paid off."

Claude Moniquet, the director of the European Strategic Intelligence and Security Centre, said: "The moment is poorly chosen, but we must dare to say that London pays without doubt for years of errors in the course of which radical organisations - Saudi, Moroccan, Algerian, Pakistani, Yemenite or Turkish - have been able to set themselves up in their suburbs, publish their bulletins, open their websites and find financing for their activities."

Police seeking Syrian suspect

- Herald Sun / by Bruce Wilson

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 11. A Syrian thought to have masterminded the Madrid bombings has emerged as a major suspect as police confirmed the London terror death toll was likely to reach at least 70. And the search for bodies on the Underground continued in what police said were harrowing conditions. Police have asked relatives of those missing to produce hairbrushes, toothbrushes, or other means of making DNA identifications of bodies.

Many of the dead are so badly mutilated that making an identification any other way is impossible. Last night, none of the 49 confirmed dead had been officially identified.

Police said the terrorists synchronised their attack to cause maximum carnage, as it emerged that the three Tube bombs exploded within 50 seconds. The first explosion was on the Tube at Aldgate at 8.50am, followed seconds later by blasts at Edgware Rd and King's Cross.

Anti-terrorist sources said they believed the bus bomb, which blew 57 minutes later, was designed to strike commuters fleeing the Tube. The level of sophistication leads senior officers to believe there were four bombers — and all could still be alive and active.

Al-Qaida terror cells typically support each bomber with a team of up to 10 accomplices, leading to fears up to 40 terrorists could still be at large.

"That points to either people who had synchronised their watches, or it could be that the bombers used timing devices," Deputy Assistant Commissioner Brian Paddick said. "The devices on the trains were placed on the floors, close to the doors — suggesting the bombers had left shortly before they exploded. This points strongly to the existence of four separate bombers." Police were still refusing to deny reports a timer was found in the bus wreckage. Mr Paddick said they were keeping an open mind about whether the bomber died or if he left the device before fleeing.

Britain's terror alert spread to England's second largest city, Birmingham, yesterday when police evacuated 20,000 people from its centre. They supervised four controlled explosions in a bus, though they said later it was a precautionary measure not linked to the original threat. A suspect package in a central city hotel room, described as having wires and a switch on it, was harmless. It, too, was not linked to the initial threat. Police also closed the A38 ringroad around Birmingham, but refused to give details of the threat. Police said they were acting on hard intelligence when they ordered Birmingham's Golden Mile district to be evacuated. The city was closed down at 8.40pm, traffic came to a standstill and helicopters hovered over the thousands of people trudging out of town. Inner-city houses and flats were evacuated.

Intelligence and security forces were widely quoted identifying a Syrian, Mustafa Setmariam Nasar, in connection to the attacks. One report said British police had been warned by their Spanish counterparts that London was a target and that Mr Nasar, now believed to be in Iraq, had set up a sleeper cell of terrorists.

Another prime suspect was Moroccan Mohamed al-Guerbouzi, 44, who was granted asylum in Britain but has since vanished. He was sentenced to 20 years' jail in absentia in 2003 over a bombing in Casablanca in Morocco.

There were conflicting reports from government and intelligence sources about the terrorist cell behind the attack. One report said the search was for a foreign-based Islamic cell — a very small number of men who arrived from mainland Europe and North Africa, probably separately. Others, including one of Britain's most senior policemen, said the cell was London-based.

There was huge interest in a young man, recently arrived from North Africa, who was injured in the No. 30 bus explosion. But investigations have been hampered because the CCTV camera on the bus apparently had not been working since June.

The Sunday Times newspaper reported it had seen leaked documents from the Prime Minister's office showing that al-Qaida was secretly recruiting affluent, middle-class Muslims in British universities and colleges.

The reports said a network of extremist recruiters was circulating on campuses, focusing on people with technical and professional qualifications, notably those with engineering and IT degrees.

The task of removing up to 30 remaining bodies from the Russell Square Underground, on the Piccadilly line, continued in atrocious conditions. Heat in the cramped tunnel, which reaches more than 30m deep, hit 60C. It was filthy, with old asbestos sheeting blocking the way, and rat-infested.

Det-Supt Jim Dickie said: "Most of the victims have suffered intensive trauma, and by that I mean there are body parts as well as torsos."

Global terror probe turns to morocco connection

- Agence France Presse (AFP)
- Daily Star

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 11. The probe into the deadly London bombings and the forthcoming trial of the suspected murderer of Dutch filmmaker Theo Van Gogh are raising questions over Morocco's role in international terrorism.

A London-based Moroccan, Mohammad al-Garbuzi, was one of the first people to be named in the press in connection with Thursday's blasts in the British capital which killed 55 people and wounded another 700. According to Britain's Independent and Daily Mail newspapers, Scotland Yard and MI5 have urgently requested European agencies to help trace Garbuzi, who has vanished.

Moroccan nationals, or people of Moroccan origin, have in fact been named in the investigations into all the main terrorist attacks of the past few years around the world. They include the September 11, 2001, attacks in the United States in which around 3,000 people died and the March 11, 2004, Madrid train bombings which killed 191 people.

The man accused of the murder of Dutch film maker van Gogh, Mohammad Bouyeri, whose trial opens on Monday, has dual Dutch-Moroccan nationality and is presented as an Islamic militant by police. Van Gogh, who was shot and stabbed to death while cycling in Amsterdam on November 2, 2004, was widely known for his criticism of Islam.

As his murder prompted a spate of anti-Islamic acts in the Netherlands, Moroccan authorities rejected a call from a senior Dutch politician, Frits Bolkestein, on King Mohammad VI to condemn Islamist extremism and show Morocco "does not want to be an exporter of murderers." Moroccan Justice Minister Moham-mad Bouzoubaa also strongly contested the claim that Morocco was involved in Islamic extremism in the Netherlands, pointing to the dual nationality of some of those involved, and that some had been born in the Netherlands.

Spain warned for months ago of Syrian's bomb plans

- The Australian

Jul 11 2005 - Jul 11. Spanish security sources are said to have warned four months ago that a Syrian al-Qa'ida veteran suspected of the London bombings had identified Britain as a likely target.

Mustafa Setmariam Nasar, 47 - the terrorist believed to have organised last year's Madrid train attacks and now believed to be in Iraq - had set up a sleeper cell of terrorists in Britain, Spanish investigators said. Coded commands from the Syrian, thought to have included threats to other European countries such as Britain, were found in a flat raided after the Madrid bombings in March last year.

But the Spanish investigators said they believed he was planning an attack to coincide with the British general election in May, rather than the G8 summit last week.

Investigators have noted strong similarities in the methods of the two multiple, co-ordinated bombings against public transport systems.

Last Friday, a team of Spanish detectives arrived in London to help the Metropolitan Police with the investigation.

After last week's explosions, police were believed to be looking into Mohammed al-Gerbouzi, a Moroccan living in London who has been jailed in Morocco in his absence for terrorism offences. Yesterday, however, senior police officers were strongly discounting that he had any involvement in the London bombings.

Nasar, from Aleppo, Syria, also known as Abu Musab al-Asuri, who has a \$5million bounty on his head, is believed to have fled to Iraq or the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

He has connections with London going back more than 10 years, has mixed with many prominent terror suspects and has reportedly been arrested in Britain in connection with bombings on the Paris Metro.

When Nasar moved to London in June 1995, he was already under surveillance by Spanish police, who made a video recording of his departure with his wife Elena.

They were accompanied by Abu Dahdah, a Syrian later arrested in Spain, accused of recruiting bombers and now on trial for providing support to the September 11, 2001, conspiracy.

Once in London, Nasar moved his family into a house in Paddock Road, Neasden.

From there, he edited the Al Ansar magazine, a newsletter of the Algerian Armed Islamic Group.

He became an associate of the cleric Abu Qatada, one of the detainees released from a British prison last year and accused of being al-Qa'ida's ambassador to Europe.

Nasar was reported to have been arrested but later released by British police following the 1995 bomb attacks on the Paris Metro.

The US Department of Justice said at the weekend that Nasar had served as a European intermediary for al-Qa'ida before leaving for Afghanistan in 1998. He is now believed to be an associate of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the al-Qa'ida chief in Iraq. Some reports claim he has been spotted in London since the Madrid bombings.

Nasar is at the centre of a network of connections uncovered by British and Spanish police that link Britain and the Madrid atrocities.

One of the last phone calls made by a group of seven bombers cornered in a police siege of a flat near Madrid was to a British Muslim cleric using the name Ben Salawi.

After the call, the bombers blew themselves up, apparently at his command. British police said the cleric's name was not known to them but might have been an alias.

London Bombing Teil IV

- UK Foment of Islam's Radical Fringe
- Mossad on Explosives
- Lack of Clues
- Terrorist Hardliner Suspected
- Bombers Reveal Huge Gap in Intel
- Police Call in Foreign Terror Experts
- The Suicide Bomb Squad from Leeds
- Hunt for the Master of Explosives
- Home Grown Terrorists
- Britain Shares Intelligence
- Terrorists Trained in Western Methods
- Terror Cell Capable of Further Attacks
- The Day We Were Dreading
- Terrorists 'Used Military Explosives'

The UK foment of Islam's radical fringe

- Financial Times / by Stephen Fidler, Jimmy Burns and Roula Khalaf
- Intelligence Digest / by Glenmore Trenear-Harvey

Jul 14 2005 - Jul 13. Suicide attacks on London's transport system a week ago by young Muslims who were born and grew up in Britain are prompting soul-searching inside and outside Britain's Muslim community. The willingness of a few young men from Yorkshire to blow up their fellow citizens in their own capital - more than a tenth of whose population is itself Muslim - has opened up a debate that may produce far-reaching policy and other changes.

The bombings have also energised an international discussion about policy towards radical Muslims in Britain's midst. Some US officials think British official tolerance of radical foreign Muslims, many of whom have sought refuge from harsher regimes, sowed the seeds of Thursday's bombings. A similar message has come out of France, where the authorities have taken a much harsher line than the British against radical Islamists, especially since bombings hit Paris in 1995.

Though those now known to have been behind the London attacks were British, it is not yet clear whether there was a foreign mastermind or logistical support. Whatever facts emerge, some reassessment of British policy towards radicals within the Muslim community can be expected.

In the view of US critics, the UK should, for example, have acted more quickly in arresting clerics such as Abu Hamza al-Masri and Omar Bakri Mohammed, whom they see as having fomented extremism. Abu Hamza, whose Finsbury Park mosque in north London acted as a magnet for extremists including Richard Reid, the shoe bomber who tried to blow up an airliner in December 2001, was arrested in May last year. His trial on charges including incitement to murder Jews and other non-Muslims started this month. Mr Bakri Mohammed, whose group was criticised for glorifying the September 11 attacks, told a Portuguese magazine last year that British troops in Iraq were "terrorists" and predicted that several groups were planning to target the UK. He also said the life of an unbeliever, in other words a non-Muslim, had no value. "There is a certain amount of reluctance on the British to move quickly. What they never seem to realise is that by the time they know they have a problem it is too late," a former senior US intelligence official said this week.

In France too, officials have been long-standing critics of British tolerance of Islamist dissidents, particularly from North Africa. They also believe that their policy at home of cracking down on jihadists and supporters - while not guaranteeing safety - has been more effective than Britain's. Surveillance of radicals is much more intense, with every mosque monitored; extremists and purveyors of hate speech are harassed and deportations are much more frequent. "The British do not have this system of permanent surveillance, with deep penetration of problem communities," Alain Chouet, former director general of the DGSE, the French foreign intelligence service, told Le Figaro. Referring to Britain's domestic security service, he added: "On the contrary, they have with MI5 a machine that performs well once

the threat has been declared."Mr Chouet said French harassment techniques had limitations "but they upset networks and prevent them from moving into action".

The charge, then, is that the British approach to extremists is too soft or too reactive. While British surveillance of extremists is acknowledged to have been more intensive than elsewhere in Europe, bar France, the claim is also that the UK does not really understand what is going on inside Muslim communities. Though the government has reached out to leaders of the Muslim community, it is not clear how well connected with most Muslims some of these leaders are. Britain tried a light touch in part because it wanted to avoid action against extremists that would risk alienating what the government takes to be a quiet majority of Muslims. British security officials argue that the more than half-dozen terrorist plots they have uncovered before and after September 11 show they are doing something right. While they acknowledge that there may once have been substance to the French claims that the British were careless about the safe haven offered to Islamist radicals, that has not been the case for more than a decade. "From 1994 onwards, I don't think the 'Londonistan' claims could be levelled with any accuracy," says one. There are also differences that mean the UK is unable to follow aspects of the French approach. One is legal: France's system of investigating magistrates is recognised by some in the UK as more effective in dealing with terrorism than Britain's adversarial judicial system. Security officials say one reason they do not detain suspects more quickly is because they need to gather evidence that will stand up in court.

France has also chosen a course that insists on assimilation, as shown by the government's insistence that headscarves and other religious adornments should not be worn in schools. Britain's approach has been largely to let Muslim communities alone. There is still some official pride in the traditions of the rule of law, free speech and safe haven to dissidents. One official says the security services do not know whether more people than before were listening to radical clerics. "Attendance at a mosque and listening to a radical cleric or a moderate cleric is not a criminal offence. Free speech is entirely lawful and we don't monitor the activity of people going to mosques," he says.

Moreover, the experience of France, burned in the furnace of the Algerian war of independence that ended in 1962, is different from Britain's. People from the Asian subcontinent make up close to 80 per cent of Britain's 1.6m Muslims, Pakistanis alone accounting for 45 per cent of them. By contrast, North Africans make up more than half of France's Muslims, 30 per cent of whom are Algerian.

The perception of British laxness in dealing with the issue is by no means universal. "There are no liberal laws here," says an official of Amnesty International, the human rights organisation. "The UK has some of the most draconian emergency legislation in the whole western world."

Arab political activists warn that blaming last week's attacks on London's historic role as a refuge for dissidents is designed to divert attention from the real threat. "There is no evidence that the liberal values here are a reason behind last week's attacks," insists Saad Djebbar, a London-based Algerian lawyer. "There are many countries that don't allow any groups on their territory and have had the same terrorist attacks."

While it is true that, 10 years ago, individuals who incited violence against targets outside the UK were rarely prosecuted, human rights activists say the liberal image is no longer valid. Even before September 11, legislation was tightened and suspects can be indefinitely detained without trial.

Moreover, though nothing has been announced, British policy appears to have shifted in emphasis in the last two years. Abu Hamza's arrest and the placing of his mosque into the hands of moderate Muslims was seen as a watershed. The British government last year also increased MI5's budget, mainly to help it deal with counter-terrorism, which occupies two-thirds of its personnel. The extra funds should allow the agency to increase its staff from 2,000 last year to 3,000 in 2008.

Whatever decisions are taken in dealing with Islamic extremism - and disaffected Muslim youth - the problem is unlikely to go away. One third of Britain's 1.6m Muslims are under 16 - compared to a fifth of the population as a whole. Timothy Savage, a US foreign service officer expressing his own opinion, argued in last summer's Washington Quarterly that dealing with Islam would do more to shape Europe than any other issue this century. If current trends of immigration, a low birth rate for non-Muslims and a high Muslim birth rate continued, he said, "Muslims could outnumber non-Muslims in France and perhaps in all western Europe by mid-century." According to the Pew Research Center, the population of the European Union's current 25 member states will be one-tenth Muslim by 2020.

Detailed but little-noticed research on the attitudes of British Muslims, published by the London-based Islamic Human Rights Commission at the end of last year, suggested a critical view of British foreign policies and a fear of being stereotyped as terrorist suspects. The research, based on interviews with people mostly between 15 and 29, found respondents overwhelmingly critical about British policy towards the Palestinians, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Bosnia and Iraq. In another finding, 57 per cent of respondents disapproved of the requirement for new citizens to swear allegiance to the crown. Another area of concern in the IHRC survey was a perception of increased Islamophobia in the aftermath of 9/11. A clear majority thought anti-terrorist laws and the way they were being implemented, coupled with media reporting of police investigations, needed to be more sensitive about the "stereotyping of all Muslims as potentially hostile terrorist suspects".

Massoud Shadjareh, the IHRC's main spokesman, says: "There has been a radicalisation of the British Muslim community - but in the sense of a raising of consciousness about issues which Muslims feel strongly about. The biggest expression of this has been the participation of British Muslims in demonstrations against the war in Iraq. But this doesn't mean that you now have large numbers of British Muslims prepared to blow people up."

According to Mr Shadjareh, firebrands such as the Syrian-born Mr Bakri Mohammed, who moved to the UK in 1985 and was the leader of the radical al-Mujahiroun group, have been "politically demonised" but have negligible backing among British Muslims. "He has between 50 and 100 supporters who turn up for his meetings."

Nevertheless, UK officials recognise that clerics such as Abu Hamza play an important role in radicalising young British Muslims. "There is certainly a link between some of the individuals and the radicalisation of young Muslims. When you look at the textbook of radicalisation, more often than not a radical cleric is somewhere in the picture," says one security official. How many such radicals there are is hard to tell. Sir John Stevens, the former head of London's Metropolitan Police, has said that there are 10,000-15,000 supporters of al-Qaeda. But security officials say they see this number as a reflection of passive support - the milieu in which it is possible for terrorists to operate - rather than the number of potential terrorists. "Al-Qaeda's strategy is deception," says Saad al-Faguih, a Saudi Islamist dissident who denies involvement with terrorism. "Look at the 19 bombers from September 11: they did nothing to show links with Muslim activities." Before the bombings, the police and MI5 were working on the basis of intelligence assessments that about 300 British nationals had gone through or been trained in al-Qaeda camps and most were identified and had been under surveillance.

Their most worrying admission, however, was an estimate that there could be as many as 30 unidentified people, among them British nationals, about whom they had no intelligence but who could potentially mount attacks. Officials say British participation in the US-led invasion of Iraq has motivated some radicals - but they are cautious about numbers. "A steady trickle of radicals is travelling from the UK to Iraq," says one. But in the past they have gone to Bosnia, Chechnya and Afghanistan. The fact is that there were and are young men who wanted to go and fight jihad. It's still in its early stages in terms of the numbers in Iraq. So far the numbers going to Iraq are far lower than Bosnia. A few we know have come back."

Finding out who will turn from radicalism to terrorism is a tough task for the security services. The initial reaction from those who lived near the young suicide bombers suggests they kept their activities and views secret from their neighbours and parents. "Those who engage in terrorism don't go around shouting about it before doing it," says Mr Shadjareh. "There is also some evidence that British Muslims who turn to terrorism are converts or reconverts, and do not have a really deep and sophisticated understanding of the Muslim faith." Yesterday in the House of Commons, Shahid Malik, Labour MP for Dewsbury, where one bomber had his home, said the attacks represented "a defining moment" both for the country and for its Muslim community. "Condemnation is not enough. British Muslims must, and I believe are, prepared to confront the voices of evil head-on," he told parliament.

Yet some resist steps that to bring Muslim leaders closer to the government. Imran Waheed, representative for the ultra-radical Hizb ut-Tahrir Britain, says: "The proximity between some individuals and organisations in the Muslim community and the British government has serious implications for the real interests of our community.

"If sincere, these individuals and organisations must now ask themselves why the British government, which pursues a brutal colonialist foreign policy over the entire Muslim world, is so keen to fund them, promote them and support them."

Mossad tells Brits: Same explosives in Tel Aviv and London

- Israel Insider
- Spy News / by Mario Profaca

Jul 13 2005 - Jul 11. The terror attack in London last week may be tied to a suicide bombing on Tel Aviv's beachfront in April 2003, German newspaper Bild am Sonntag reported.

According to the paper, Mossad officials informed British security officials that the explosive material used in the Tel Aviv attack on Mike's Place pub as apparently also utilized to stage the bombings in London on Thursday.

The Mossad office in London received advance notice about the attacks, but only six minutes before the first blast, the paper reports, confirming an earlier AP report. As a result, it was impossible to take any action to prevent the blasts.

"They reached us too late for us to do something about it," a Mossad source is quoted as saying.

The German newspaper reported that the Mossad relayed an analysis of the explosives used in the Mike's Place attack to British security officials, with sources in the Israeli intelligence agency quoted as saying there is a "high likelihood" the explosives used in Tel Aviv were the same ones used in London.

After analyzing the explosive material used in the Mike's Place attack, the Mossad concluded it was produced in China and later smuggled into Britain, the paper reported. The explosives were apparently stashed by terrorists connected to al-Qaeda who were able to evade raids by British security forces.

Mossad Chief Meir Dagan is reported to have said that the explosive in question is very powerful, and "much more lethal than plastic explosives and can be smuggled undetected due to its composition."

The Mossad determined that the substance was developed and produced at the Chinese ZDF arms factory, located about 65 kilometers (about 40 miles) from Beijing, the paper reported.

However, the German story was not clear as to whether the Mossad is involved in any way in the investigation into the London bombings.

3 people murdered at Mike's Place

The Mike's Place attack killed three people, Ran Baron, 24, Yanai Weiss, 46, and Caroline Dominique Hess, 29. The bombing was carried out by two terrorists, Asif Mohammed Hanif and Omar Khan Sharif, who were recruited by Hamas in Britain and affiliated with the International Solidarity Movement in Gaza, where they stayed before carrying out the murder. The two entered Israel using their British passports.

Hanif blew himself up at the beachfront Tel Aviv pub, but Sharif failed to detonate his explosives and fled the scene in shame. A few weeks later, his body washed up on a Tel Aviv beach.

The terrorists' relatives were detained in Britain after the attack on suspicion they knew of the plot and did nothing to prevent the attack. The relatives' trial ended in July of last year, with the court ordering a retrial for Sharif's sister and brother.

Lack of Clues

- The Wall Street Journal / by Keith Johnson, David Crawford, Jeanne Whalen and Jay Solomon
- Spy News / by Mario Profaca

Jul 13 2005 Jul 13. British police are concerned that the terrorists' elusiveness after Thursday's blasts means the attackers have learned from mistakes that led to the discovery of the Madrid bombers last year, according to European law-enforcement officials close to the investigation.

British police raised the death toll from the attacks on three subways and a bus to at least 52. Investigators have been pursuing similarities between the London bombings and those in Madrid, which killed 191 people. In Madrid, the train bombers tried in vain to blow up a high-speed rail link days after the first blast but couldn't place the detonators.

Two weeks later, the bulk of the terrorists blew themselves up in a Madrid safe house after they were cornered by police. Investigators said they had planned additional attacks in Madrid: Plans found in the building's rubble highlighted new targets, and the seven terrorists retained more than half of their initial cache of 440 pounds of dynamite, according to Spanish police and court documents.

That has sparked concern among British police that the terrorists involved in last week's bombings could have additional explosives and operatives for more attacks, these officials say. A British police spokesman wasn't available to comment. British police have warned the public to be on high alert for attacks, and Britain is on a higher security alert than after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in New York and Washington.

Counterterrorism experts say radical cells learn from each attack and refine their operations, making preventive measures and police investigations more difficult. "Terrorists discover our tactics and respond," said Bernd Carstensen, a German counterterrorism detective. "The competition is continuous."

British Prime Minister Tony Blair, speaking in Parliament, said there was no specific intelligence pointing to the attacks before they happened and that they couldn't have been prevented. He said it was probable the London attacks were carried out by Islamist extremists, though no group has been blamed.

The suspected masterminds of Madrid still are at large. A senior Spanish antiterrorist investigator said in an interview it was "very likely" that Moroccan Amer el Azizi, who allegedly helped organize the Madrid bombings, also helped organize the London attacks. Mr. Azizi is at large, after fleeing Spain in November 2001 for Tehran.

British police also have asked their European counterparts for information on Mustafa Setmariam Nasar, a 47-year-old Syrian militant, in connection with the London attacks. Spanish police believe Mr. Nasar may have helped organize the Madrid attacks.

U.S. officials have said in recent days that they were working with British intelligence to find Mr. Nasar, who is a naturalized citizen of Spain. U.S. and European authorities said they also are investigating whether Mr. Nasar is a link between senior al Qaeda leaders in Pakistan and Afghanistan and European-based militants and sleeper cells.

As recently as January, Mr. Nasar called for the use of dirty bombs inside the U.S. in an article in a Syrian online magazine. The comments were circulated on a number of important Islamic Web sites.

Mr. Nasar wrote that Muslim militants world-wide should work with countries that could possess nuclear and biological weapons — such as North Korea and Iran — to attain the tools to deliver a devastating blow inside the U.S.

As of yesterday, Mr. Nasar's writings were still posted on the Web site. Counterterrorism experts said they are unsure of Mr. Nasar's whereabouts, but he is believed to have been operating out of Pakistan and Afghanistan as recently as November. Officials at the U.S. Office of the Director of National Intelligence yesterday declined to comment on Mr. Nasar.

The attackers in London already have avoided some mistakes that put police on the trail of the Madrid bombers within two days, the time they took to make their first arrest. The Madrid terrorists abandoned a stolen van with detonators, a cassette tape of Quranic verses and multiple fingerprints.

London police still are searching for hard leads inside the subway tunnels where the bombs exploded and on the remains of the bus.

Andy Trotter, deputy chief constable of the British Transport Police, said the world's leading forensic experts were examining the bomb fragments for clues.

He said police were taking "many hundreds of statements" from members of the public who believe they have information tied to the bombings.

The London bombers also apparently relied on timing devices for the explosives on the subway cars, instead of using cellphones to detonate the bombs, according to British police. Sir Ian Blair, commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, said at a news conference the explosives in the London bombs "certainly were not homemade" but declined to give more detail.

In Madrid, the bombs were detonated using cellphone alarms. By tracing the serial number and subscriber card inside the one cellphone bomb that failed to explode, Spanish police quickly traced the attack to a shop in Madrid run by known radical Muslims. The police then traced cellphone calls from those initially arrested to round up the bulk of those who carried out the bombings.

According to Spanish court documents and police reports, suspected Islamic terrorists have refined how they plan for such attacks. First, they started using coded conversations to confound wiretaps, and then they began using encryption to try to establish secure communications.

The aftermath of the London attacks continued to ripple through Europe. During the weekend, police in Italy mounted a broad antiterrorism sweep, arresting 142 suspects, 83 of them immigrants. The stepped-up operation was in response to the bombing in London, though authorities didn't say that any of the suspects were linked to Thursday's attacks.

Lessons Learned

- The London bombers sought to avoid the mistakes made by those who attacked trains in Madrid:
- Cellphones: Spanish police traced bombers through cellphone data in 48 hours
 - Safe house: Madrid bombers used only one safe house to assemble bombs
 - Oversized bombs: Huge packs drew attention; London bombers halved the amount of explosive
 - Planning: The Madrid bombers had a poor strategy for after the attack
 - Evidence: Madrid bombers left detonators, Quran tape, fingerprints at crime scene

TERRORIST HARDLINER SUSPECTED

- Mirror / by Jeff Edwards
- Spy News / by Mario Profaca

Jul 13 2005 Jul 13. Police believe a highly experienced al-Qaeda-trained terror team may have masterminded and set up the London bomb blitz.

Anti-terrorist squad officers are convinced the four young Britons who martyred themselves were merely willing "foot soldiers" prepared to die for their cause.

Scotland Yard suspect an international team of hardline terrorists - including a specialist bomb maker - came to Britain to orchestrate the attacks. A senior source within the security services said last night: "We do not believe for a moment the young men who carried out these suicide attacks acted alone.

"They were mere cannon fodder, impressionable young men brainwashed to do the vile deeds of other people who are still out there somewhere." Detectives suspect four to six terrorist planners, some of whom may have learned their skills in Afghanistan, Syria or Iraq, probably entered the country earlier this year on forged travel documents.

From there they were introduced to the four men selected for the deadly mission and then set about training them in how to carry out the job without being intercepted.

It is thought that the terrorist group probably carried out a series of reconnaissance missions on the Underground and London streets looking for suitable targets.

A Special Branch insider said: "This attack probably followed the same pattern as we have seen in a number of incidents carried out by al-Qaeda abroad. The actual bombers do not have skills, they are just willing young troops who are happy to die for their beliefs.

"The real villains of the piece are the people who supplied and smuggled in the explosives, filled the weapons and trained the young volunteers in how to use them. We know there must be plotters and planners. We are checking records now to see if we can find how they entered the country, whether they are still here or if they have left.

"We are convinced other attacks are on the way. There was a large stock of explosives discovered at one house in Yorkshire. It was clearly there for a purpose and that can only be more attacks were planned.

"What we don't know is if there are parallel teams hiding in other cities around the country waiting for the word to attack.

"The people behind these plots are almost certainly veterans of other al-Qaeda inspired atrocities around the world. They may be Middle Eastern or Asian and travel on a series of false identities provided for them."

Police yesterday carried out four controlled explosions on a car they believe could have been used by the London bombers - and were last night planning a fifth.

Bomb disposal officers were said to be trying to remove explosives from the car and detonate them outside. Hundreds of people were evacuated from the area around Luton railway station car park amid fears the vehicle had a bomb inside.

Bedfordshire Police were tipped off by Scotland Yard after a woman reported seeing a group of men leaving the car, which is not thought to have been moved since Thursday - the day of the bombings. Police evacuated the railway and bus stations, nearby businesses and student accommodation shortly before 3pm.

Scotland Yard want to take the car for forensic examination. Martin Stuart, deputy chief constable of Bedfordshire Police, said: "We can only apologise for the inconvenience this has caused but safety is our priority, which can only be ensured by this action.

"We are working closely with the Metropolitan Police during this time and hope the disruption can be kept to a minimum."

Luton has been at the centre of a series of anti-terrorism raids in recent years. A second car was seized by Bedfordshire Police after another tip-off from Scotland Yard, a force spokesman said later.

The car was found at an undisclosed location in the county before being taken to Leighton Buzzard for examination. Police said: "We now have a second vehicle we are examining. We are carrying out forensic work on it."

The seizure was based on intelligence from Scotland Yard.

Bombers reveal huge gap in intelligence

- The Guardian / by Richard Norton-Taylor
- Spy News / by Mario Profaca

Jul 13 2005 - Jul 13. Britain's intelligence and security agencies were having to come to terms last night with something they had feared but hoped they would never have to face - the presence of suicide bombers in Britain. It is the first time, not only in Britain but Western Europe, that bombers have been prepared to commit suicide and completed the act.

In Madrid last year, the train bombs were set off by timers triggered by mobile phones. Some of the bombers were prepared to commit suicide but only when they were cornered later by the Spanish police.

Yesterday we learned that, for the first time, suicide bombers - four of them - had carried out an attack in Britain, choosing the most vulnerable of targets. Furthermore, the bombers, in the view of the security services, were British born and bred.

Not only that: they could plot the attack without being detected, either by MI5 agents and informants or by the security and intelligence officials scanning emails and intercepting telephone calls looking for suspicious communications.

What concerns the security services is that the four bombers appear to have been "radicalised" in Britain, not indoctrinated in training camps and religious schools in the Middle East.

How young men apparently from stable backgrounds - as well as from broken or unstable families - are attracted to commit such atrocities has concerned MI5 and the Home Office for a long time. Whitehall has commissioned reports on

the phenomenon. A senior MI5 officer is understood to have addressed a meeting of G8 home and interior ministers on the issue in Sheffield last month.

Security sources said yesterday that ministers would have to look again at radical clerics who can encourage extremism and influence young men disillusioned with western culture. It seems clear that MI5, the domestic security service, needs to build up its network of agents, an anti-terrorist official said yesterday. It is already setting up regional offices in Britain.

"Agents are essential," a senior official said last night. He compared the task facing MI5 to looking at a blank piece of paper. "The four bombers are in the middle. You then go out from there, look at their pasts, where they met, what they had done in the past, where they had travelled, who they associated with."

That should help the security and intelligence agencies to build up a picture, not only of these four bombers, but the extent of the potential threat posed by other suicide bombers in Britain.

In an interview with BBC London yesterday morning - after the security services and the police made their breakthrough - Sir Ian Blair, the Metropolitan police commissioner, said it was likely there would be another attack, although he insisted the terrorist threat could be defeated. "Another attack is likely, there's no doubt about that. But when - who knows?" he said.

Since the September 11 attacks on the US, senior British anti-terrorist officials have said there are probably fewer than 30 or so extremists prepared to commit a terrorist attack - and they meant plant a bomb, not blow themselves up with it.

Ever since Thursday's attacks, briefings by the police and intelligence officials - offering guidance on conditions of anonymity - consistently indicated that the bombers got away. The prospect of suicide bombers may have seemed too remote, or too awful, to contemplate.

The immediate question they are confronted with is who were their associates, in particular who, if not they themselves, made the bombs and procured the equipment for them.

Anti-terrorist officials said yesterday that the bombs were "high grade" but could have been made with commercially available material with the help of instructions on the internet.

Police call in foreign terror experts

- The Guardian / by Ian Cobain
- Spy News / by Mario Profaca

Jul 13 2005 - Jul 12. Police, intelligence agents and forensics experts from 27 countries have been asked to help develop leads in the hunt for the London bombers, it emerged yesterday. They were brought together for a confidential summit at Scotland Yard at the weekend, where they were asked to assist with every aspect of the inquiry. While Scotland Yard declined to discuss the meeting, some of those present said it was apparent that, at that stage, the British authorities were frustrated at their lack of progress.

As well as representatives from the US, France, Germany and the Netherlands, officials from Turkey, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Romania, Ireland and Japan attended the summit, which is thought to have been unprecedented during a terrorist investigation in this country. There were also officials from Interpol and Europol, as well as at least one representative from the British military bases on Cyprus.

A team of Spanish police had already begun working alongside their British counterparts to examine possible links with the Madrid train attacks in March last year which claimed 191 lives. They held a separate meeting with British detectives yesterday, at which they discussed the possibility that the terrorists could have made last Thursday's bombings resemble the Madrid attacks in order to confuse the investigation.

American investigators flew to London within hours of the bombings. Several Australian police officers present at the summit offered help in identifying the type of bombs used in the attacks, while an Israeli delegate is understood to have offered assistance with victim identification.

The head of one European domestic intelligence service said that there was considerable discussion of the difficulties with the inquiry. "They briefed us first on what they know and what they don't know," he told the New York Times. "We were asked to help them answer every question they have. The clear message was that there are a lot of hypotheses, some ideas, for the moment no actual concrete piece of evidence, no formal element to guide you."

The participants were asked to look at suspects in their own countries who may have links with the UK, and individuals who may have recently returned from Iraq.

Some European delegates expressed surprise at Scotland Yard's request for help, believing that this country's close intelligence links with the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand would have ensured that investigators already had access to a large pool of information and expertise. "We're all under threat of attack, and we must work together to stop the next one," said one delegate. "The next attack could happen outside my window."

Russian counter-terrorism officials - who were not present at the Scotland Yard summit - are said to suspect that terrorist attacks were planned in each of the five cities competing for the 2012 Olympic games, and were carried out in London the day after it won the bid.

Nikolai Kovalyov, a former head of the Russian federal security service, who now heads a parliamentary committee, said: "The global community overlooked this threat from a common enemy."

Among the countries reportedly participating in this unprecedented meeting were: In addition to Israel and Spain, the countries involved were Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States. Officials from Europol and Interpol also attended the meeting.

Thanks to Professor Martin Rudner / Canadian Centre of Intelligence and Security Studies

The suicide bomb squad from Leeds

- The Times / by Michael Evans, Daniel McGrory and Stewart Tendler

Jul 13 2005 - Jul 13. Four friends from northern England have changed the face of terrorism by carrying out the suicide bombings that brought carnage to London last week. It emerged last night that, for the first time in Western Europe, suicide bombers have been recruited for attacks. Security forces are coming to terms with the realisation that young Britons are prepared to die for their militant cause.

Three of the men lived in Leeds and the immediate fear is that members of a terrorist cell linked to the city are planning further strikes. The mastermind behind the attacks and the bombmaker are both still thought to be at large. The man who planted the bomb at Edgware Road was named last night as Mohammed Sidique Khan, 30, the married father of an eight-month-old baby, who is believed to have come from the Leeds area.

Two other terrorists were Hasib Hussain, 19, who bombed the bus in Tavistock Square, of Colenso Mount, Leeds, and Shehzad Tanweer, 22, the Aldgate bomber, who lived at Colwyn Road, Leeds. Police are still trying to identify the fourth, whose remains are believed to be in the bombed Tube train carriage on the Piccadilly Line. It is thought that he comes from Luton.

Armed police raided six addresses in West Yorkshire yesterday, including the homes of three of the men, who they now know travelled to Luton in a hired car last Wednesday to join the fourth man. They boarded the 7.40 Thameslink train to King's Cross the next day, each armed with a 10lb rucksack bomb. Police found a bomb factory in Leeds containing a "viable amount of explosives". Explosives were also recovered from a car left parked near Luton station.

The raids came after the discovery of driving licences and credit cards at the scenes of the explosions, and a telephone call from the mother of Hasib Hussain, who asked police to try to trace her son.

A relative of one of the bombers was arrested and taken to London for questioning. Intelligence agencies say that at least two of the men had recently returned from Pakistan. All four were British, but with origins in Pakistan. MI6, MI5 and British diplomats were in touch with the Pakistani authorities last night to try to track down any connections with terrorists there. Security sources confirmed that none of the bombers was on any MI5 file, although one had links to a person investigated by police.

The four were captured on CCTV cameras at King's Cross Thames link station, laughing together and carrying rucksacks, minutes before they set off for their targets at 8.30am on July 7.

Hunt for the master of explosives

- The Times/ by Daniel McGrory and Michael Evans

- Spy News / by Mario Profaca

Jul 13 2005 - Jul 13. A Europe wide investigation was under way yesterday to uncover the source of the military explosives used in the bombings. Traces of military plastic explosive, more deadly and efficient than commercial varieties, are understood to have been found in the debris of the wrecked Underground carriages and the bus.

Determining the origin of the explosives is vital and, as The Times has disclosed, one man is believed to have assembled all four devices. Scotland Yard has asked its counterparts around Europe to check stock-piles at military bases and building sites for missing explosives.

Military explosive is hard to detect, easy to hide, stable and, if smuggled across a European border and then into Britain in a drum or other container, would most likely evade any explosive-sniffing devices.

The availability of Semtex, originating from a Czech factory and used extensively by the Provisional IRA, has dried up as a result of intensive efforts.

However, there are a number of alternatives, notably C4, which comes in sticks and can then be moulded into a shape suitable for a bomb. Military sources said that 10lb of C4 - the size of each of the London bombs - would fit into a shoebox or standard rucksack. C4 is a high-quality plastic explosive that has been used by al-Qaeda-affiliated terrorists in other attacks. Richard Reid, the British shoe bomber, hid ten ounces in each of his shoes when he boarded Flight 63 in Paris on December 22, 2001.

Indonesian police found traces of C4 at the Bali bomb scene in October 2002; and C4 was used by the terrorists who attacked the American warship, USS Cole, in Yemen in 2000.

The explosive is manufactured mainly in the US but there has been evidence that military explosives have been bought by terrorist groups from sources in Croatia and elsewhere in the Balkans, a region heavily imbued with criminal organisations.

Islamic militants are reported to have obtained military explosives from sources in Belgrade in recent years.

Forensic scientists have told The Times that the construction of the four devices detonated in London was very technically advanced. "You keep hearing that terrorists can easily make a bomb from using instructions on the internet. You can, but not of the design and sophistication of these devices. These were well put together, and it would appear the bomb-maker has highly developed skill," one expert said.

The trigger device was "almost identical" to the ones found in the rucksack bombs used in the Madrid bombings in March last year - although the terrorists used industrial dynamite stolen from a quarry in northern Spain rather than plastic explosives.

Investigators have not determined whether the London bombs were set off by synchronised alarms using mobile telephones - as they were in Madrid - or some other device such as a watch alarm.

Superintendent Christophe Chaboud, head of the French security service's Anti-terrorist Co-ordination Unit, said: "The use of military explosives is very worrying. We are more used to seeing home-made explosives made from chemicals. "How did they procure them? Either they were supplied by the underground market, for example from the Balkans, or they benefited from accomplices who removed explosives from a military base."

The police's nightmare: home-grown terrorists

- Independent / By Kim Sengupta
- Spy News / by Mario Profaca

Jul 13 2005 - Jul 13. This was the nightmare scenario that the authorities feared most - suicide bombings carried out by British citizens leading seemingly ordinary lives, slipping under the radar of the security agencies.

What emerged yesterday transforms the investigation into the London attacks. These, the first suicide bombings in western Europe, put into grim context just how much Britain is now on the front line. Until now the images of militants blowing themselves up had only been seen in television pictures from Palestine and Israel, Iraq and Chechnya. The security agencies will now have to unravel how this was replicated in Britain and work out how to prevent a recurrence.

The task they face is daunting. At the end of a dramatic day of raids and arrests, a few stark facts have emerged - the men who bombed London were "home-grown" terrorists, who travelled to London to kill and maim fellow residents of this country, and to die in the process.

Along with recriminations about the failure of intelligence over the London bombings, over the past four days there had been speculation they had been the work of foreign insurgents.

Scotland Yard helped to add to this impression by urgently requesting information from European security agencies about north African suspects and dismissing reports of suicide bombers being involved for as long as possible to avoid panicking the public. Intelligence sources acknowledge that dealing with an attack by foreign Islamists would have been easier. There were available databases, recognisable suspects, and tranches of information from allied services in Europe and the Middle East.

What they are faced with instead appears to have been a small cell of Britons, hitherto unknown to the authorities, who carried out a fairly unsophisticated operation by simply getting on to trains and a bus with their deadly packages.

Such acts are unlikely to be affected by pronouncements from the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, on tracking and seizing international terrorist funds. The whole London operation probably cost less than £1,000.

The painstaking forensic tests have given the police a fairly accurate idea of the type of bombs used and inquiries are under way as to whether the bombers or their associates had been in contact with foreign groups to smuggle in explosives and manufacture the device.

But Robert Emerson, a security analyst, pointed out: "These appear to be pretty simple devices, easy to put together from manuals, or the internet, pretty cheaply. What we saw last Thursday was a pretty base-level operation. The critical advantage the terrorists had was that they were unknown. There are certain to be other, similar, groups out there."

Then we have the biggest problem, what sanction can you have against someone who is already prepared to give up his life."

Lack of intelligence remains the biggest problem. Charles Clarke, the Home Secretary, has admitted that the bombings "came of the blue" and the police and MI5 had been caught completely unaware.

Yesterday's development showed the great pace at which the investigation has moved. The main reasons for this, however, have been the discovery of items belonging to the bombers at the site of the bombings and CCTV footage at King's Cross station. It was these leads which allowed the security agencies to sift through the information which came in huge amount from the public and make their move yesterday.

It is this bank of information and the inroads made by yesterday's raids and arrests which will form the basis of the investigation from now on.

The police and the security agencies will be able to establish the contacts of the bombers, the mosques they attended and trace a wider circle of sympathisers.

But removing a few heads of the hydra does not guarantee future security. John Stevens, the former commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, disclosed at the weekend that during his tenure there were eight separate extremely serious plots by "home-grown terrorists" - and each one involved a different group. According to MI5, about 3,000 British Muslims have passed through paramilitary training camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan. The majority, it was thought, had divorced themselves from extremist activities after returning to the UK.

Senior police now believe, however, that there is a far greater pool of recruits for a British insurgency, fuelled by anger over the Iraq invasion, than previously thought.

Much had been made of the similarities between the London and Madrid bombings. The commuter trains in the Spanish capital were not blown up in suicide attacks, but, like here, took place simultaneously at the height of the morning rush hour without warning.

At the end of a 14-month investigation, Jorge Dezcallar, the former head of CNI, the Spanish security service, said: "This was a local sleeper cell. It may have been inspired by al-Qa'ida, but it had no links with Osama bin Laden. Some of the bombers were thieves and petty criminals. They did not even have an Islamic past. They are almost impossible to detect."

The Spanish investigation, too, benefited from luck. A van containing Islamic tapes and traces of explosives was found at a station car park. Then a bag retrieved on a train, initially thought to belong to one of the victims, yielded an unexploded bomb. From such breaks Spanish police managed to hunt down the terrorists and plug vital information into the international security system.

The British authorities can only hope they have similar success.

The unanswered questions

- * How did this group remain undetected to make their attack?
- * Were they working with associates who are preparing further bombings?
- * Did the group receive bomb-making material from abroad? If so, where?
- * If this was an autonomous cell, how many more are there?
- * And do they also contain people prepared to carry out suicide missions?
- * Just how many so-called "home-grown terrorists" are active at present?
- * Have these people been involved in armed struggles abroad - perhaps in Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan - and returned to carry on the war in this country?
- * Why did it take the authorities so long to admit publicly that suicide bombers may have been involved?

Britain shares intelligence on London blasts

- AFP
- SAPA
- Spy News / by Mario Profaca

Jul 12 2005 - Jul 11. British intelligence officials met at the weekend with counterparts from 28 countries, including the United States and Israel, to brief them on the investigation into the London bombings, police said on Monday.

"A briefing was held at Scotland Yard on Saturday with foreign liaison officers and foreign delegations from 30 countries and organisations," a Metropolitan Police spokesperson told reporters.

At least 52 people were killed and 700 injured in three blasts on the London Underground and one on a bus.

The briefing, opened by a top Metropolitan Police official, was to "update our partners on the details of the attack and give an overview of the investigation to date", the spokesperson said.

"The briefing was part of our continuing close liaison with agencies across the world," he added. Delegates from Australia, the United States, Japan, France, Germany, Italy, Israel and Singapore among other countries attended, plus Interpol and Europol.

Terrorists trained in Western methods will leave few clues 'Sleeper' cells have learnt how to avoid detection

- The Times / by Michael Evans and Daniel McGrory
- Intelligence Digest / by Glenmore Treneer-Harvey

Jul 12 2005 - Jul 12. The new breed of terrorists behind the London bombings are techno-experts who have become skilled in evading the electronic surveillance methods used by Western intelligence services.

Trained in counter-surveillance techniques in camps in Pakistan, Afghanistan and the southern Philippines, the latest generation of Islamic extremist espouses the al-Qaeda terrorist organisation's hatred of the West but relies on its own motivation and planning to carry out attacks.

This new breed does not wait for orders from on high, or for some coded message from the al-Qaeda hierarchy. In every sense these mostly young international terrorists have become the equivalent of the old Cold War Soviet "sleepers" - men and women committed to a cause who learn to blend in with their host countries to undermine it.

Those responsible for the London bombings have already proved that they were sufficiently savvy to avoid becoming one of the many terrorist suspects who are watched and monitored by MI5.

Security sources said: "It's clear they have a general awareness of some of the techniques that can be used against them and have become more and more conscious of surveillance activities."

The sources added: "They are also aware that while modern technology, such as mobile phones and e-mails, can enhance their way of operating, there are also built-in risks because they know they can be traced when they make use of them."

Recruits to what is being called the "new al-Qaeda" are computer-literate and skilled at ensuring that they leave no electronic footprints. This generation of jihadists was given as much training in technology as it was in bomb-making and reconnaissance missions.

They have learnt from the mistakes made by previous terror cells in allowing telephone calls and e-mails to be intercepted. The new recruits are taught how to communicate without sending e-mails or encrypting messages in seemingly harmless websites.

The easiest method is for a cell to share a single anonymous e-mail account. All the members of the cell would know the log-in and password, but instead of sending messages, they write their communications and leave them in the draft folder. This allows the others to read the message which never leaves the account. If the terrorists have to exchange information they use more complex forms of encryption, relying on mathematical algorithms to scramble communications, so that they are meaningless to anyone who does not have a numerical key to decode them.

They have also mastered the art of steganography, which involves hiding messages inside picture or music files sent over the internet. The key to the sleeper terrorist is his normal appearance and his ability to avoid standing out in a crowd. Although some of the thousands of closed-circuit televisions in the capital may have the bombers on tape, they will be difficult to distinguish from anyone else caught on camera. "We expect they will be clean-shaven, smartly dressed and looking every inch the Westerner," one security source said.

Dominic Armstrong, director of research and intelligence at Aegis Defence Services, said: "The London bombers were an 'A team', clearly well trained and good at counter-surveillance."

Terror cell 'capable of further attacks'

Security experts point to home-grown group using small explosives which can be easily hidden and detonated

- The Guardian / by Richard Norton-Taylor and Duncan Campbell
- Intelligence Digest / by Glenmore Treneer-Harvey

Jul 12 2005 - Jul 12. A small British-based terrorist cell with the ability to strike again placed the bombs on the London underground and bus, intelligence and anti-terrorism officials suggested yesterday.

A senior police officer warned that another attack could be imminent and anti-terrorism officials pointed to the possibility of future bombings. "It is more difficult to detect home-grown groups," said one anti-terrorism official.

"They are less conspicuous and they don't move around." The task of the security and intelligence agencies was made more difficult, officials said, because local cells do not need to take instructions from abroad. But they said they had no concrete evidence to back up their suspicions.

"People are radicalised and take it on themselves [to carry out terrorist attacks]," a senior anti-terrorism official said.

Another told the Guardian: "It was not necessarily a closely affiliated [al-Qaida] group waiting for the green light. They do it in their own time." He said it would not have been difficult for a small group of individuals to plant bombs on the underground. No detailed reconnaissance was needed, and there was no complicated access, he said. "It could have been a very self-contained operation".

"If the bombers had got away and live to fight another day, they would do it again," an official said. "If they did not, [the attacks] could be replicated. They have identified a gap in the defences."

Security and intelligence sources said it was not difficult to make small bombs with timers and detonators. Microchips and a small circuit board could explode a device which previously required large and unwieldy equipment. Christophe Chaboud, the head of the French Anti-Terrorism Coordination Unit and one of five senior officials sent by the French government to London immediately after Thursday's attacks, told Le Monde that the explosives used appeared to be of military origin.

"The charges were not heavy but powerful," said Mr Chaboud. "Among the victims, many of the wounds [lesions] were in the lower limbs, indicating that the explosives were placed on the ground, perhaps under the seats. The type of explosives appear to be military, something which is very worrying. We're more used to cells making home-made explosives with chemicals. How did they get them?"

Either by trafficking, for example, in the Balkans, or they had someone on the inside who enabled them to get them out of a military establishment." Asked about his discussions with British anti-terrorism officials, he replied: "I noticed sangfroid but also serious concern. We know the bombings in Madrid would have been the start of a wave of attacks thwarted by the speedy actions of the Spanish police."

The French official said that "for us, the bombings were not a surprise, but the confirmation of something that was inevitable, given the international context, notably the war in Iraq ... The war in Iraq has revived the logic of total conflict against the west."

A senior British anti-terrorism official said it was "entirely possible" the explosives had a military origin, adding that nothing had been ruled out. The police have said only that the bombs contained less than 10lb (4.5 kg) each of "high explosives" and were small enough to be carried in rucksacks. A source from a European intelligence agency represented at the meeting in London of 30 countries told Reuters news agency the attacks were most likely carried out by a local cell of Islamist militants with no track record. "We think the known Islamists who live in Britain are under such close observation that they're limited in their capacity for action. Against that background, the suspicion is that it's a local group," the source said. Senior police officers continue to warn of the possibility of a further attack.

The commissioner of police for the City of London, James Hart, said there was a strong possibility of another attack. Mr Hart said: "We can't possibly assume that what happened on Thursday was the last of these events." In a bid to get closer to potential home-grown terrorists, newly recruited police officers are being encouraged to plan a terrorist attack. The course is designed by Hertfordshire police.

The day we were dreading

- BBC News Magazine / by Jonathan Duffy
- Intelligence Digest / by Glenmore Trenear-Harvey

Jul 12 2005 - Jul 8. For some years London has lived under the shadow of the terror threat. Thursday's blasts were the grisly realisation of what many had quietly feared, but hoped would never happen.

According to those who were best informed, it was always a question of when, not if.

The former commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Sir John Stevens said as much last year, in the wake of the bomb attacks on Madrid which left almost 200 people dead. "[T]here is an inevitability that some sort of attack will get through," said Sir John in March 2004.

But who could have guessed that a damp and unseasonably chilly Thursday in July would have been the "when" we had, to a greater or lesser degree, been dreading.

As Tony Blair subsequently noted, the start of the G8 conference in Gleneagles appeared to be the motivation for the series of deadly bomb blasts across London.

In depth: London Attacks

But there have been plenty of potential flashpoints before. The general election in May, major sporting events, Christmas shopping, the start of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq - each has prompted a surge of anxiety, only to pass off without incident.

Terrorism has long been a reality in Britain. But the devastating attacks on New York and Washington on 11 September 2001 took the threat to a disturbing new level - one where anybody at anytime could, conceivably, be a target, without any hint of a warning.

In the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 hijackings, Londoners started to contemplate the risk of copycat attacks on their city.

Office works and residents in tall buildings feared they could be caught up in suicide plane attacks, similar to those which brought down the Twin Towers in New York. Architects began to question the case for skyscrapers.

By the end of that September, the government was warning of fresh al-Qaeda strikes, which could affect the UK. "We are in a very dangerous situation," warned one Cabinet minister.

The following month saw anthrax attacks in the US, and once again the anxiety generated spread across the Atlantic. Company mail rooms began emergency procedures to deal with suspect packages. Government buildings were evacuated and a House of Commons sitting was even suspended as the climate of suspicion grew.

Chemical threat

The Doomsday warnings began in earnest a year later, when the Home Office issued a document detailing all the likely generic targets for a possible al-Qaeda attack on the UK, including train stations and airports. "The threat remains as high from here on in as it had been hitherto fore " Glenmore Trenear-Harvey.

By early 2003, troops had been drafted in to Heathrow airport following intelligence which suggested there was a plan to shoot down an aircraft.

Then came talk, from MI5 supremo Eliza Manningham-Buller, of a possible chemical, biological or nuclear attack. It was a "realistic possibility" in a major Western city.

With each new warning anxiety levels ratcheted up and then, for some at least, the fear melted away as life went on as normal and the spectre of terrorism took a backseat.

Yet the underlying mood of concern continued to grow, stoked by a series of events, from the ring of concrete barriers erected around Parliament to high profile arrests of terror suspects; from rehearsals of how the emergency services would respond to a strike, to discoveries of potentially lethal weapons.

Even the most maverick of stunts, such as when Fathers for Justice campaigners stormed the grounds of Buckingham Palace in fancy dress, were cast in the light of, "what if they had been terrorists?"

Reassurance and fear

Abroad, UK interests were established as targets. The bombing of the British consulate in Istanbul, which killed 14 people, unsettled the resolve. In the Yemen, the embassy was closed indefinitely because of security fears.

Somewhere along the line - the covert nature of intelligence means it's not entirely clear when - the official threat level was raised by MI5, Britain's domestic intelligence agency, from "substantial" to "severe general".

Reports of how intelligence experts had helped foil planned attacks drew a mixed response - a sense of reassurance that the authorities might have the upper-hand, but inevitably also a feeling of vulnerability; a belief that the "when" spoken of by Sir John Stevens was looming ever closer.

The attacks on Madrid's train network in March last year, in which 191 people died, sent alarm levels soaring once more, particularly among commuters who were reminded of the vulnerability of any public transport network.

Some commentators suggested Londoners were being ruled by an irrational fear, particularly over the impact of a chemical or biological strike.

"Do we really know they have these dreadful weapons?" Bill Durodie, of the King's College Centre for Defence Studies, asked through the BBC News website in June 2003. "Since September 11th the actuality of terrorism remains rather more mundane."

Paradoxically though, the weeks before Thursday's simultaneous rush-hour strikes on London had been characterised by an ever so slightly more relaxed mood. In June, in an advisory note to leading business, MI5 said the terrorist threat had been downgraded back from "severe general".

By Thursday morning itself, the story uppermost in Londoners' minds was the buoyant news of how, the day before, the capital had won its bid to stage the Olympics in 2012.

The mood of optimism barely had time to take root before it was shattered by news of the blasts. The wave of attacks that had been unfolding around the world since 11 September had, it seemed, finally caught up with London.

And for those seeking reassurances from the aftermath of turmoil, believing that it could have at least been worst, intelligence analyst Glenmore Trenear-Harvey sounds a cautious note. "The threat remains as high from here on in as it had been hitherto fore."

Terrorist gang 'used military explosives'

- The Times / by Michael Evans, Sean O'Neill and Philip Webster
- Intelligence Digest / by Glenmore Trenear-Harvey

Jul 12 2005 - Jul 12. A single bombmaker using high-grade military explosives is believed to be responsible for building the four devices that killed more than 50 people last week, The Times can reveal.

Similar components from the explosive devices have been found at all four murder sites, leading detectives to believe that each of the 10lb rucksack bombs was the work of one man. They also believe that the materials used were not home made but sophisticated military explosives, possibly smuggled into Britain from the Balkans.

"The nature of the explosives appears to be military, which is very worrying," said Superintendent Christophe Chaboud, the chief of the French anti-terrorist police, who was in London to help Scotland Yard.

News of the breakthrough comes as a Times poll conducted in the aftermath of the bombings indicates that an overwhelming majority of the British public favours a tough approach to terrorist suspects. Almost 90 per cent of people want the police to be given new powers to arrest people suspected of planning terrorist acts, tighter immigration controls and strict baggage inspections.

Londoners, who bore the brunt of last Thursday's carnage, were not as supportive of draconian measures as people in the rest of the country.

The public anger will strengthen Tony Blair's hand as he prepares to speed up new anti-terrorist laws to help the hunt for the bombers. "If, as the fuller picture about these incidents emerges and the investigation proceeds, it becomes clear that there are powers which the police and intelligence agencies need immediately to combat terrorism, it is plainly sensible to reserve the right to return to Parliament with an accelerated timetable," he said.

More than 800 police officers were being drafted in to assist Scotland Yard's anti-terrorist branch in Britain's largest criminal inquiry. Film from 2,500 CCTV cameras in the centre of the capital is being examined and more is being taken from cameras across Greater London. Detectives are also searching for a vehicle, flat or garage that the terrorists may have used as a bomb factory.

It is understood that the examination of the No 30 bus at Tavistock Square has yielded vital fragments that have sharpened the focus of the police inquiry. Forensic pathologists have been paying particular attention to the remains of two bodies found in the mangled wreckage of the double-decker.

A senior police source said: "There are two bodies which have to be examined in great detail because they appear to have been holding the bomb or sitting on top of it. One of those might turn out to be the bomber." A decapitated head was found at the bus scene which has been, in Israeli experience, the sign of a suicide bomber.

The confirmed death toll stands at 52 but is expected to rise. Police family liaison officers have been assigned to 74 families. As London prepares to hold a two-minute silence and mass vigil on Thursday to commemorate its dead, 12,000 United States service personnel have been ordered not to visit the city for security reasons.

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